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Avante!

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O «AVANTE!» LEGAL!

ESTE é o primeiro «Avante!» legal. Este é o primeiro órgão de imprensa do Partido Comunista Português publicado legalmente depois do golpe fascista de 1926.

A mudança radical operada na vida política portuguesa depois do 25 de Abril tem na publicação legal do «Avante!» uma testemunha flagrante. Ela assinala a vitória das forças democráticas sobre o fascismo e ficará como o melhor sinónimo da conquista pelo povo português da liberdade de expressão do pensamento, da liberdade de imprensa, designadamente.

Ao longo de mais de quarenta e três anos, o «Avante!» clandestino foi uma arma valiosa na luta contra a exploração capitalista, a opressão fascista, a guerra colonial, a dominação imperialista. Foi a voz irreprimível do PCP, a voz da classe operária, a voz dos explorados e oprimidos de Portugal. Foi um órgão de informação livre, num Portugal amordaçado. Disse a verdade sobre o nosso país e outros países num clima de deturpação e de mentira. Foi uma grande trincheira da resistência ao fascismo. Foi um organizador colectivo dos camaradas, dos trabalhadores, de todos os antifascistas. Foi um órgão de consciencialização e orientação, um grande mobilizador das massas populares na luta pela paz, pela liberdade, pela independência nacional, pela independência dos povos das colónias.

A história do «Avante!» está indistintamente ligada à história do PCP. Aparecendo pela primeira vez em 15 de Fevereiro de 1931, o «Avante!» completou 43 anos de publicação clandestina e só, desde 1941, regular e ininterruptamente. Além preferido da actividade criminosa da Pide/DGS, o «Avante!» pôde resistir e alargar gradualmente às mãos de milhares e milhares de portugueses, durante tantos anos, porque foi a criação e a obra de um Partido solidamente organizado e profundamente enraizado nas massas populares, porque foi servido na redacção, nas tipografias, por comunistas abnegados e totalmente devotados ao Partido. De entre estes recordaremos os nomes de José Gregório, Maria Machado, Dias Coelho e José Moreira, os dois últimos assassinados pela Pide. Recordamos também o corajoso anonimato de tantos comunistas que trabalhando para o «Avante!» e para o Partido viveram dezenas de anos na clandestinidade, sofreram longas penas nas prisões, suportaram a tortura e foram perseguidos. Igualmente todos os obreiros do «Avante!» clandestino, expressamos-lhes a eterna gratidão do Partido, certos de que as mesmas acompanhadas mais sentimento pela classe operária, pelas massas trabalhadoras, por todos os presos progressistas de Portugal.

O «Avante!» surge legal para continuar a caminhada nas novas condições. Fortalecer com nome glorioso, órgão central do Partido Comunista Português, o «Avante!» continua ao serviço da classe operária e restantes trabalhadores, reflectirá os seus anseios e reivindicações, preparará pelas suas intensas, operará firmemente a sua luta. O «Avante!» é o porta-voz autorizado da política do Partido Comunista Português em todas as dominios. Com-lhe impulsionar a luta pela democracia, pela independência nacional, pela fim da guerra colonial, pela socialismo.

O último número clandestino do «Avante!» (Abril de 1974)

A transformação do «Avante!» clandestino num órgão de informação legal exige que se alterem completamente as condições da sua produção. Isto não se conseguirá em poucos dias. O primeiro «Avante!» legal representa lacunas, omissões, imperfeições várias. Mais do que fazer uma obra perfeita procurou-se essencial interessar já, como pudemos, levando a voz do PCP e as suas posições à classe operária, às massas populares.

Tarefa cada vez objectivos imediatos a consolidação e o alargamento das liberdades, o fim da guerra colonial, a realização de eleições livres para uma Assembleia Constituinte e a instauração em Portugal de um regime democrático, apontamos depois, dois cubetos de primeiro «Avante!» legal, para:

— Que se reforce a unidade dos trabalhadores e do povo, a unidade de comunistas, socialistas, católicos, liberais, a unidade de todos que se agitem ao regresso do tirania e da opressão fascistas;

— Que se fortaleça a organização das massas populares nos Sindicatos, no Movimento Democrático, no Partido Comunista;

— Que se consolide o alianço do movimento popular com o Movimento das Forças Armadas, que se multipliquem os laços de camaradagem e ajuda entre as massas populares e os militares;

— Que se intensifique e vigilância popular e a sua cooperação com as forças armadas em relação à actividade, às conspirações e às provocações da reacção fascista;

— Que se dê combate tenaz ao oportunismo de direita que se manifesta na tendência para abdicar dos objectivos fundamentais do movimento democrático como os esquerdismo que se expresso sobretudo na impaciência que não tem em conta a correlação de forças e em atitudes e acções divisionistas e desorganizadoras que fazem objectivamente o jogo da reacção.

OS COMUNISTAS NO GOVERNO PROVISÓRIO

Acaba de ser constituído o Governo Provisório. A participação no Governo do camarada Álvaro Cunhal, secretário-geral do Partido Comunista Português e do camarada Avelino Gonçalves, até agora presidente do Sindicato dos Bancários do distrito do Porto, constitui um radical mudança da situação política verificada em Portugal.

É a primeira vez que a classe trabalhadora e o Partido Comunista Português estão representados no Governo. Trata-se de uma extraordinária vitória política que consagra o papel da classe operária e do seu Partido, o PCP, na luta contra a ditadura fascista durante dezenas de anos e agora, nesta momento crucial, na construção do Portugal democrático. A participação dos comunistas é uma afirmação da força do movimento operário e popular e da influência e do prestígio nacional alcançados pelo PCP.

Plataforma decisiva na hora presente

O Governo Provisório representa uma ampla coligação de forças sociais e políticas entre as quais se destacam o Movimento Democrático e o Partido Socialista, oriundos na resistência antifascista, companheiros de luta e aliados do PCP. Os nomes de Mário Soares, secretário-geral do Partido Socialista, e Pereira de Moura (do Movimento Democrático) merecem especial referência. Fizem também parte do Governo representantes da corrente liberal que tinha rompido com a política fascista e tomara sem partido, de grande competência profissional. O ministro da Defesa, tenente-coronel Mário Firmino Miguel, assegura a ligação e coordenação do Governo Provisório com as Forças Armadas.

A actuação do Governo Provisório estará ligada à actuação da Junta de Salvação Nacional e do Presidente da República, general Spínola.

Falando no acto de posse como Presidente da República, o general Spínola, depois de afirmar que o mandato do seu alto cargo lhe foi confiado pelo Movimento das Forças Armadas congratulou-se com a colaboração no Governo do camarada Álvaro Cunhal, secretário-geral do Partido Comunista Português e do camarada Avelino Gonçalves, até agora presidente do Sindicato dos Bancários do distrito do Porto, salientou a

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(The Cover is by Pat Cook. The picture is the front page of the first legal *Avante*.)

AUGUST ISSUE

Sam Aaronovitch
Phil Goodwin
James Harvey
Bob Rowthorn

Economic Problems of the Transition to Socialism in Britain.

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Editorial Comments

WE welcome with joy the magnificent advance of the democratic forces of Portugal. We watched on television with joy almost mingled with tears the release of the political prisoners, the marvellous 1st of May. We have received the first legal *Avante* and seen the emergence of a democratic press. The role of the Communist Party which has fought so long, with such persistence, clarity of vision, and invincible courage in illegality has been more than confirmed since April 25. It has become the symbol of faithfulness to principle combined with consistent effort for unity of the democratic forces.

We have seen how, just as it was the illegal Communist Party that fought most consistently for solidarity with the national liberation forces of Guiné-Bissau, Mozambique and Angola, so the success of the armed struggle of these forces of national liberation was a key factor in this first victory over Portuguese fascism.

It has been a great step forward, but *the struggle is not over*. Long complex battles lie ahead. The forces of reaction still hold strong positions. They are waiting and preparing to come back. They cannot for the moment state their aims too openly. Their greatest hope lies in division—division between the working class and its allies from the middle sections of the population, between communists, socialists and democrats, between the working people and the Movement of the Armed Forces, between Portuguese democracy and the peoples of Guiné-Bissau, Mozambique and Angola.

In this complex struggle great calmness, clarity and watchfulness is necessary; and ultra leftism, whatever the motives of those that uphold it, plays into the hands of the extreme right.

A "MONDE" OBSERVER

A *Monde* correspondent (28/5/74) gave a moving account of the role of the Portuguese Communist Party immediately after April 25. The Party Offices were opened in a building of Campo-Pequeno, where, a month before, the ultra-rightist paramilitary Portuguese Legion had held sway.

"Young militants, boys and girls in blue jeans . . . smiling sell the biography of Alvaro Cunhal, who has demanded that no-one should address him as *Monsieur le Ministre*. They give out leaflets . . . , duplicated copies of *O Militante*, illegal organ of the Central Committee, or a declaration of the Party's Political Bureau which, in October 1971, called for 'an end of the colonial war', or facsimiles of *Avante* which continued to be distributed clandestinely under the Salazar regime, and now, after nearly a half-century's ban, is openly sold in the kiosks and the streets.

"50 years! It is the older leaders who find it most difficult to realise what has happened—Alvaro Cunhal with his eagle's profile, face of stone, under his thick white hair; Pedro Soares, Cunhal's comrade in captivity at Peniche, the fortress-prison beside the sea, full-faced, hale, despite malaria caught at the age of 20 in the political prison of Tarrafal on Cape Verde islands; Blanqui Teizera, José Magro and others . . . .

"They are not yet quite emerged from illegality and the struggle in the shades; they are watchful, prudent, know that nothing has as yet been *definitively* achieved, that there is a long way to go to the General Elections of March 31, 1975. They warn that '*a counter-coup by reaction is not completely excluded*', that '*many of the men of the old state apparatus are still in place*'.

"The PCP leaders have one concern and rule for action . . . avoid every provocation which could endanger the difficult construction of a new democratic society. . . .

"Already in 1921, the leaders of the PCP declare, they took up a stand in favour of the revolt of Sao-Tomé. In 1931, Bento Goncalves declared 'we communists must co-operate with the peoples who are dominated by imperialism and colonialism. Our stand against the (colonial) war does not date from yesterday'.

"An alliance of the people and the army, to bring an end as quickly as possible to the colonial war! This essential theme, defended

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by the PCP since April 25, has its complement in another thesis, put forward as an illustration of 'maintenance of a non-sectarian line'—the unity of the democratic forces....

"The demands of the workers are just and legitimate, and we defend and will continue to defend them. But we warn the working masses against any action that furthers an economic crisis. Everything must be done to avoid economic chaos which will permit the right-wing to denounce the democratic experiment."

Since this personal report by a *Monde* correspondent, much has happened. A statement by the Central Committee of the PCP again warned of right-wing efforts to split the working people and divide the people from the Movement of the Armed Forces:—

> "We are facing a conspiracy of the most reactionary elements which have not been dislodged from their positions of power by the April 25 movement.
>
> "These elements, with the conscious or unconscious help of groups of adventurists from the so-called left, are trying to push towards a situation of economic chaos, hoping to destroy the democratic conquests already achieved."

We cannot give, in these *Editorial Comments*, the latest news of the Portuguese struggles. But we are proud to print on the front cover of this issue a reproduction of the front page of the first legal *Avante* (May 17), and to reprint in the next note a translation of its first legal editorial leader.

THE FIRST LEGAL "AVANTE"

"This is the first legal *Avante*. It is the first press organ of the Portuguese Communist Party published legally since the fascist coup of 1926.

"The publication of the legal *Avante* bears vivid witness to the radical transformation of Portuguese political life carried out since April 25. Its appearance was a signal of the victory of the democratic forces over fascism and it will remain as the finest symbol of the conquest by the Portuguese people of the freedom of speech, thought and press.

"For more than forty years the illegal *Avante* was a valiant arm of the struggle against capitalist exploitation, fascist oppression, colonial war and imperialist domination. It was the irrepressible voice of the PCP, the voice of the working class, of Portugal's exploited and oppressed; it was an organ of free information in a silenced Portugal; it told the truth about our and other peoples in a climate of distortion and lies. It was a strong bastion of resistance to fascism; it was a 'collective organiser' of communists, workers, of all anti-fascists. It was an organ which raised consciousness and gave direction, a great mobiliser of the popular masses in the struggle for peace, liberty, for national independence, for the independence of the peoples of the colonies.

"The history of *Avante* is indissolubly linked to the history of the PCP. Appearing for the first time on February 15, 1931, *Avante* completed 43 years of clandestine publication, and its appearance from 1941 was regular and uninterrupted. A favourite target of the criminal activity of the PIDE/DGS, *Avante* nevertheless was able to resist and for so many years reached thousands of Portuguese people because it was the product and the organ of a firmly organised Party, deeply rooted in the popular masses; because it was served and serviced by editors, print workers and distributors, by communists ready for every sacrifice and totally devoted to the Party. Amongst them we must record the names of Jose Gregorio, Maria Machado, Dias Coelho and Jose Moreira, the last two assassinated by the PIDE.

"Let us remember too the anonymous examples of so many communists who, working for *Avante* or the Party, spent years of their lives in illegality, endured long imprisonment, or torture, or were murdered. We greet all the workers of the illegal *Avante*; we express to them the eternal gratitude of the Party, certain that our sentiments are shared by the working class, the working people, and all progressive people of Portugal.

"The legal *Avante* will continue the struggle in new conditions. Bearing a glorious name, *Avante*, central organ of the PCP, will continue to serve the working class and people, will reflect their aspirations and demands, will fight for their interests, will give firm support to their struggles. *Avante* is the authorised spokesman for the policy of the PCP in all fields. Its task is to further the struggle for democracy, for national independence, for an end to colonial war, for socialism.

"The transformation of *Avante* into a legal journal means a complete change in the conditions of its production. This cannot be accomplished in a few days. This first legal *Avante* contains gaps, omissions and improvisations. But, without trying to achieve a

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perfected work, it seemed to us essential to intervene now, carrying the voice of the PCP and its policies to the working class and to the popular masses.

"Taking as our immediate objective the consolidation and broadening of our liberties, the end of the colonial war, the realisation of free elections for a Constituent Assembly, and the establishment in Portugal of a democratic regime, we appeal from the columns of our first legal *Avante* for:—

—The reinforcement of the unity of the workers and the people. The unity of communists, socialists, catholics, liberals; the unity of all who oppose the return of fascist tyranny and repression.

—Strengthening the organisation of the popular masses in the Trade Unions, Democratic Movement and in the Communist Party.

—The consolidation of the alliance of the popular movement with the Movement of the Armed Forces; the multiplication of the bonds of co-operation and mutual aid between the popular masses and the soldiers.

—The intensification of the vigilance of the people and their co-operation with the armed forces in relation to the activities, conspiracies and provocations of fascist reaction.

—Struggle both against right-wing opportunism reflected in the tendency to abandon the fundamental aims of the democratic movement and against leftism expressed, above all, in impatience, failure to take into account the relation of forces and in divisive and disruptive attitudes and actions which objectively play the game of reaction."

ADVANCES ON THE LEFT

We, too, in the words of *Avante*, greet all the workers of the illegal *Avante*, and the workers of the new legal *Avante* with its complex tasks and heavy responsibilities.

Events in the last two months in many parts of the world have shown how closely connected are the struggles of the Communist Party and its press and the advance of the whole democratic and socialist movement.

The vote against the abrogation of the divorce laws in Italy, the vote for Mitterand in the French Presidential election, advances in Japan all show the fruits of consistent and principled communist struggle, and constant effort for the unity of democratic and socialist forces.

ITALIAN BOOMERANG

Aniello Coppola was very correct to entitle his article on the recent Italian referendum on the divorce laws—"Boomerang". (*Rinascita*, 17/5/74).

From the right wing Christian Democrat leader Fanfani to the ultra-right MSI the aim was a split in the left wing. It was for this reason that they insisted on this unnecessary referendum. They wanted an anti-communist plebiscite, but got an anti-fascist one. Fanfani led the Christian Democrat Party to its most serious defeat.

The issue of the vote was whether or not the divorce laws should be abrogated. The answer was a cascade of No's. It is interesting to compare the votes for the pro- and anti-divorce Parties in the 1972 General Election with those of the May 1974 referendum:—

In 1972:—

Votes for pro-divorce parties	17,551,369	52.5%
Votes for anti-divorce parties	15,862,257	47.5%

In 1974:—

No	19,093,929	59.1%
Si (Yes)	13,188,184	40.9%

The 1.73 per cent invalid votes of 1972 compare with 1.29 per cent in 1974.

A break-down of the votes shows not only a predictably huge NO vote in Northern cities like Turin (80 per cent), but very important opposition to abrogation in areas of the South in which the right-wing had counted on overwhelming victory.

But perhaps the most important aspect of the victory was that a very important section of Roman Catholics and of Christian Democrats voted NO. It was clear that there were broad areas of opposition inside the Christian Democrat Party (which cannot exist outside Italian society and remain uninfluenced by it).

Gian Carlo Pajetta, estimating the voting of May 12-13 wrote that:

> "the way in which the question of divorce was faced and the vote at the end of the debate showed that throughout Italy broad and deep changes of custom and of social life have taken place." (*Rinascita* May 17, 1974.)

Fanfani failed completely to put his fingers on the popular pulse, and to understand this change.

The "victory of the NO" has not solved the many problems that face the Italian people,

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continued Pajetta, but it *has* opened wide the path to a democratic solution:

> "The way which the Italian people voted, the results of the referendum, permit us to say that an answer must be found in the direction of democratic solutions, of giving real life to our institutions, of an ever greater popular control and participation."

A VICTORIOUS DEFEAT IN FRANCE

With a tremendous turn-out of 87.37 per cent of the electorate Valéry Giscard d'Estaing on May 19 became President of France by a majority of just above 400,000 votes over Francois Mitterand, candidate of the United Left. Never had a French President been elected by so small a majority.

This narrow defeat represented in fact an important advance for Popular Unity.

In March 1973 before the signature of the Joint Programme, the three Parties, who were to become its signatories, received 10 million votes. On May 5, 1974, on the first ballot of the Presidential election, Francois Mitterand received 11 million votes. On May 9, at the second ballot, *13 million* (12,975,622 to be exact)—49.19 per cent of the votes cast compared with Giscard d'Estaing's 50.80 per cent.

Mitterand, it is calculated, received over three quarters of the working class vote. He had a majority in 44 Departments compared to Giscard d'Estaing's 51. All sections of the press seem to agree that, if the youth of 18-21 had been granted the vote, Mitterand would have won.

Monde, no left-wing enthusiast, commented that Left support had reached, on May 19, a level unsurpassed for 20 years:—

> "Not in 1956 (42.63 per cent), nor at the second ballot of the Presidential election of 1965 (54.49 per cent) nor at the time of the first ballot in the legislative elections in March 1967 (43.67 per cent) nor in March 1973 (46.69 per cent), despite the current for unity at that time. May 19 was a result that must encourage (Mitterand) not to change his strategy, and must have shown clearly to M. Lecanuet that he could nourish no hope of a rapprochement between the socialists and the centre."

The Left, *Monde*, continued:

> "is coming very near to a majority. It is winning votes that recall those of the Peoples Front of June 1936 and those that immediately followed on Liberation."

And significantly, it added, in view of the enormous efforts of the French right-wing press to stir up an anti-communist bogy and divide the progressive forces:—

> "The great lesson of the second ballot was the remarkable discipline of the Left."

POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES IN JAPAN

Japan is another country faced with tough political struggles but good hopes for the Left.

Tetsuzo Fuwa, Head of the Secretariat of the Japanese Communist Party, discussed the perspective at the Foreign Correspondent's Club in Tokyo at the end of April. Japan is one of these countries, he argued, "where conditions are rapidly growing for political innovation".

He spoke of the steadily increasing support for the Communist Party over the last 10 years. In 1964 the CPJ held only five seats in the House of Representatives. Now the number has risen to 40. In 1964 the votes cast for the CPJ were over 1.6 million. In the last national election the Communist vote rose to around 5.7 millions.

Ten years ago there were only 17 municipalities in Japan with the CPJ as the leading Party. Now there are 166 (including six with progressive governors) with a total population of over 27 millions.

In a recent television interview Tanaka, the Japanese Premier (of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party) bewailed that it was beyond his comprehension that the Communist Party should grow thus "in such an age of peaceful development", when the country was experiencing "neither war nor panic".

But there were objective reasons, argued comrade Fuwa, for this growth. First was the deep contradiction between the US—Japanese military alliance and the trend of the Japanese people towards peace and neutrality. Second was the contradiction between the "high-rate growth" policy in the interests of big business since the 1960s and the living conditions of the Japanese people. There were, too, deep contradictions which the Liberal Democratic Party, with its dependence on the US for its international and on big business circles for its economic policy, was totally incapable of solving.

In this situation the Japanese Communists have put forward the aim of the formation in the 1970s of a Democratic Coalition Government.

The eventual tasks of such a Government would be to abrogate the US-Japan Security Treaty and realise Japan's peace and neutrality; to end the administration based on big business and replace it with one with a

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policy of defence of the people's lives and living; and to establish a democracy in name and reality. "Political democracy such as the plural political party system, including the freedom of opposition parties, and and the change of political regime based on election results will be ensured and fully developed under the democratic coalition government."

To achieve such a Government and such a transformation in the 1970s, said comrade Fuwa, "is objectively on the agenda in Japanese politics".

TEACHING OF ENGLISH

We wrote last month of Dr. Craig's book—*The Real Foundations*.

That Craig's type of intelligent, combative class approach finds a warm response among teachers of English in higher education was evident at a crowded and controversial conference attended by 130 lecturers in Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education, on *English Studies: The Socio-Historical and the Literary-Critical Approaches*, organised recently by Manchester Polytechnic. English continues to be one of the subjects most sought after by sixth-formers, and English degree courses in universities, colleges and departments of education are usually over-subscribed. But once the coveted places have been won, there's a good deal of disappointment and dissatisfaction, both among students and those who teach them with the content of courses, the way they are taught and examined.

The new degrees now being validated by the CNAA[1] in polytechnics and colleges ought to give us a chance to break away from a purely critical, academic approach to literary works as timeless artefacts, studied in isolation from the culture that produces them. Some useful beginnings have been made with the Open University leading the way. Portsmouth and Kingston Polytechnics, for example, offer broadly-based courses, including history and philosophy and Sheffield Polytechnic is pioneering a degree course in Communications, in which film and television are studied alongside literature. But too often the new degrees, CNAA or B.Ed., in the name of "maintaining standards", carry forward much of what is stuffiest and most sterile in the older Universities pattern of literature teaching—three-hour essay papers, lectures that can be summarised and learned, the cramming and regurgitating of second-hand critical opinions.[2]

At the conference, defenders of (roughly) the *status quo* in English studies, notably Professor C. B. Cox, co-editor of the notorious Black Papers on Education ("more means worse") were sharply challenged by lecturers who felt the trouble was not the low quality or "hypocrisy" of their students but rather the failure of older-type scholastic courses to meet student needs for creative, relevant, cultural experience.

Bernard Bergonzi of Warwick University, significantly reported (not without a touch of regret) that young people were no longer satisfied with the so-called "ideological innocence" of British empiricist criticism in the Leavis tradition. They recognised that literature is always seen in the light of one's general ideas and preconceptions, and therefore demanded to study ideas and ideologies, which usually meant Marxism—even if they had to read it in French! This was valuable, even in his anti-Marxist view, because it forced everyone concerned to examine and state his own ideological assumptions (in Bergonzi's case a "stoic humanism" for which any big improvements in the human condition are "frankly not on").

Terry Eagleton spoke on problems of Marxist criticism, and Michael Green, of Birmingham University, on English as part of wider cultural studies.

The most appreciated contribution, however, was David Craig's detailed practical explanation of the methods actually used in his own modern studies course at Lancaster University, (admittedly only part of a larger and more conventional course). Instead of grubbing their way through the "ashy crust" of received critical opinion, his students are encouraged towards "excited discovery", with a minimum use of secondary material, and no lectures except on request. Performance and tape-recording of poems and passages takes the place of much of the more formal "practical criticism". Students hand in not only essays (usually on literature of their own choice) but also their own creative writing, mainly novels and stories. A course on "Modern Life in Literature, Film and Sound" began with (a) "Growing up in

[1] March 29-31, 1974. "Council for National Academic Awards."

[2] Among school English textbooks, the most widely sold are the collections of past O-level and A-level exam papers. They are now rivalled at University level by collections of "Twentieth Century Views" or "Casebooks", each containing a dozen or more critical essays on a single literary text.

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the Sixties" (including seminar papers where students traced back their own personal development and experience) and went on to consider (b) Industrial living and (c) Total War (including "non-literary" texts like Jungk's "Brighter than a Thousand Suns", Jackson and Marsden's "Education and the Working-class" and R. Fraser's Penguin collection of workers' autobiographies.

Film and pop records are used alongside novels and poems. And instead of a three-hour examination paper, much of the course is assessed by "projects" freely undertaken by the students—film-making, song-recording, local history and so on, in a way already familiar in some colleges of education, but usually absent from degree courses in other institutions.

The ideas implicit here (which are applicable not only to modern literature) were eagerly seized on and developed during the rest of the conference, as providing not only a more enlightening and enjoyable course of study, but one more relevant for those going into teaching or the media (as so many English graduates do). The results will hopefully be seen in more pressure both on CNAA and Universities, for courses that encourage students to use their creative talents, and relate their literary interests to the world they live in. That, in turn, should mean less disillusion and fewer drop-outs.

LAWRENCE & WISHART PAPERBACKS

Three new Lawrence & Wishart paperbacks were published in April-May—*The Burston School Strike* by Bertram Edwards, *The Shrewsbury Three* by Jim Arnison, and *Outlines of Marxist Philosophy* by Kevin Waddington.

Later they will be publishing the latest book of Dr. John Lewis—*The Uniqueness of Man* (dealing with question of "human nature") and *Poor Man's Guardians* by Stanley Harrison—a vivid account of two centuries of development and struggle of the democratic and working class press from "Wilkes and Liberty" to the *Morning Star*.[3]

NLB PUBLICATIONS

New Left Books publications over the past year have included Walter Benjamin's *Understanding Brecht* and *Charles Baudelaire*, Lucio Colletti's *Marxism and Hegel*, Maria Macciocchi's *Letters from Inside the Italian Communist Party to Louis Althusser*, Nicos Poulantzas's *Political Power and Social Classes* (co-published with Sheed and Ward), and Georges Lefebvre's *The Great Fear of 1789*.

Heading their list this year is their two-volume paperback edition of Albert Soboul's *The French Revolution, 1787-1799*, originally published in French by Editions Sociales. The two NLB paperback volumes are being published together in August.[4]

Professor Soboul is the leading French authority on the Revolutionary period and is currently Professor of the History of the French Revolution at the Sorbonne. For some twenty years, he has produced a stream of books and articles on all aspects of the period, including the definitive study of the Paris *sans-culottes*, the men and women of the organised popular movement. He is also a leading expert on the intellectual history of the time and has edited editions of the writings of Marat and Robespierre among others.

Recent historians of the French Revolution, with a British historian, Alfred Cobban, leading the field, have attempted to dismantle its materialist interpretation as a struggle between clearly recognisable class interests, which marked the victory of the bourgeoisie over feudalism. Soboul's sweeping account of the whole process—economic, political and social—from its national origins to its international repercussions should set the record straight for all time, and his special foreword to this edition is a specific response to his British and other critics.

NLB are also bringing out later this year Nicos Poulantzas's *Fascism and Dictatorship*, an analysis of the fascist state in Italy and Germany in the twenties and thirties, with an account of the changing attitudes of the different classes to the Nazi and Fascist regimes, particularly in their formative years. It also summarises and critically examines the various analyses and policies towards fascism of the Communist International and also those of individual communist parties and other parties and groups claiming to represent the left. The author, an exile from Greece, lives and teaches in Paris.

CONCEPTS OF MODERN ART

Can one speak of the *development* of modern art in the last 75 years? What kind of

[3] All these are in paperback at prices ranging from 45p to £2.00. There will also be a hard-back edition of the book by John Lewis.

[4] £1.75 per volume; there is a hardback published simultaneously in one volume for £8.50.

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order can be brought to the seemingly chaotic helter-skelter succession of styles and stances revealed? Even at the very beginning of the modern period, new styles, techniques, or "movements", emerged so swiftly that within ten years—by 1910—the Impressionists found themselves a rear-guard rather than the avant-garde. By the 1960s a "movement" could dash onto the scene and disappear before anyone but the specialist could note its existence or assess its significance.

In his piece in the Pelican (£1.25) *Concepts of Modern Art*, Lucie-Smith begins: "Minimal Art is the newest label in the world of modern art" then wryly remarks "unless a still newer one is created before this book comes out". It stirs the thought in the reader's mind . . . if art is always the reflection of a given society why does art today appear to be bursting into fragments?

The new Pelican book contains sixteen essays on the major art movements from the turn of the century, and reproduces 111 illustrations, well selected to serve as useful visual notes to the text. Directed to the general reader rather than the specialist, the essays are nevertheless informative and entirely readable.

MARXISM AND LAKE COMO

What promises to be an interesting 12 days of Marxist study is the Lake Como Summer Holiday School in August, organised by the Education Department of the Communist Party, with the co-operation of the Milan Federation of the Communist Party of Italy.

Included in the theoretical discussions will be sessions on Italy as well as on Britain, which will consider problems of unity, alliance and perspectives for socialism. Interest in the school is evidenced by the way it was completely booked up within a few weeks of its announcement.

Another illustration of interest in Marxism is the response to a new Introductory course *About Marxism*, the first print for which was sold out in three weeks and the second reprint is selling rapidly.[5]

[5] Obtainable from the Education Department of the Communist Party. Price 12p plus 4p postage, 16 King Street, London WC2E 8HY.

Discussion on Inflation:

Inflation and Inter-Imperialist Rivalries

David Cobham

(The author is a post-graduate economics student at Manchester University and a member of the Moss Side Branch of the CPGB.)

This paper presents an analysis of the causes of the acceleration of inflation throughout the capitalist world from the late 1960s. It argues that this accelerated inflation was closely related to the crisis in the international monetary system, and that both were the product of an intensification of inter-imperialist rivalry. It does not analyse *per se* the lower rates of inflation in most of the advanced capitalist countries between 1945 and the late 1960s. And although touching briefly on the question of whether the current inflation and international monetary crisis are the "final crisis" of world capitalism, it does not try to discuss what policies the Left should put forward in this situation.[1]

Since it will be argued that the current inflation results from an intensification of inter-imperialist rivalry it will be necessary first to look at the general significance of the arrangements by which international economic relations are ordered. Section II

[1] I am very grateful to George Zis for much help and encouragement, and for detailed comments on an earlier draft. I am also grateful to Phil Leeson and Dave Purdy for helpful advice.

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will examine the specific arrangements governing post-war economic relations between the advanced capitalist countries from the point of view of the principles on which the system was explicitly based and the implications of those principles. In Section III the actual performance of these arrangements will be surveyed, with an emphasis on the factors leading to the crisis. Section IV will show how these factors led both to the acceleration of inflation and to the breakdown of the arrangements governing international economic relations since 1945. Finally two possible objections to the analysis will be discussed.

I THE NATURE OF AN INTERNATIONAL MONETARY SYSTEM

Within a single country competition between different capitalist producers is subject to a unified currency. That is to say, a company can change the relative price of its products only by changing its own profit margins or by changing its own costs. In international economic relations competition between different national capitalist groups is not subject to a unified currency: each group has its own internal currency. If the relationships between these currencies (exchange rates) are fixed then price competition depends on the willingness of each group to change its own profit margins and on its ability to change its own costs (e.g. by attacks on trade unions designed to lower real wages). But if the exchange rates are not irrevocably fixed one national capitalist group may be able to improve the price-competitiveness of its products simply by changing the exchange rate between its own and other currencies.

To analyse what level of exchange rates a national capitalist group, or capitalist state, would want, international economic relations can be divided into two major flows: the movement of visible and invisible goods and services, private and official transfers, and the repatriation of profits and other forms of investment income, i.e. the current account; and the movement of capital for short and long term investment, i.e. the capital account. The motive force for an individual capitalist and for a national capitalist group is the drive to accumulate capital. Thus for current account flows the monopoly capitalist class of an advanced capitalist country (for which trade in manufactures is the most important part of current account flows and for which the export of primary products is relatively unimportant) wants (*ceteris paribus*) a "low" exchange rate (i.e. for its currency to be worth *less* in terms of other currencies) since this will increase the domestic accumulation of profits as follows: domestically produced goods and services will be more competitive so that it will be possible to have higher sales (and output) of goods on both domestic and foreign markets at higher profit margins; and repatriated investment income will be worth more in terms of domestic currency.

Imports will of course cost more with a "low" exchange rate, but raw material, capital equipment and intermediate goods imports constitute only a (small) part of the value of production, so that there will be a net gain for the capitalist class; and imports of food and manufactured consumption goods do not affect the capitalist class unless they lead to successful pressure for higher money wages to maintain real wages: even so wage costs and imported raw material, intermediate and capital goods costs constitute less than 100 per cent of the value of production, so that there must be a net gain.

Exchange Rates

For capital account flows such a monopoly capitalist class (at a time when multilateral direct foreign investment between advanced capitalist countries is growing rapidly) wants a "high" exchange rate (i.e. for its currency to be worth *more* in terms of other currencies) since this will make it cheaper for its own members to buy capital assets in other countries (an important source of capital accumulation) and more expensive for the capitalists of other countries to buy up the domestic assets of its members.

Thus there are reasons for the monopoly capitalist state to want both a "high" and a "low" exchange rate. The rate which it actually decides to try to establish will depend on the composition of that country's current and capital account flows, the relative importance of the two flows and the relative importance and power of different groups within the monopoly capitalist class.

All this would be largely irrelevant if states were unable to influence their exchange rates in the long term. In the short term it is always possible to maintain an exchange rate at which the balance of payments is showing a heavy deficit or surplus, provided (in the case of a heavy deficit) the state has available enough reserves of gold and foreign exchange to produce an equilibrium in the foreign exchange market at that exchange rate. The availability of reserves depends on past balance of payments experience and the willingness of foreign banking institutions to make loans (and the strings they attach to such loans).

Maintenance of a balance of payments disequilibrium, however, will produce monetary pressures which may in certain circumstances be beyond the control of the state and may then frustrate the objectives of maintaining the exchange rate at that level, by causing changes in the domestic price level. Instead of financing a deficit or accumulating reserves, it may be possible to use various forms of exchange control to give equilibrium in the

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foreign exchange market—e.g. direct import controls or capital controls: thus the US has recently relaxed its controls on capital exports in order to prevent either a balance of payments surplus or an appreciation of the dollar. However the use of such forms of exchange control may be unacceptable to important groups within the monopoly capitalist class or may evoke retaliation from other countries.

These three factors—the availability of reserves, the possibility of uncontrollable monetary pressures being set up, and the feasibility of using various forms of exchange control—determine the state's ability to manipulate its exchange rate in the short term. That ability would be of little use unless there was also some way of manipulating the demand for and supply of foreign exchange in the long term. The crucial factor here is the ability of the monopoly capitalist class to use the increased profits to increase productive capacity, in order to increase aggregate output and shift the schedules of the demand for and supply of foreign exchange to give equilibrium in the foreign exchange market at the desired exchange rate. The speed at which this increase in productive capacity occurs (if it occurs) determines the duration of the "short term".

Exchange Rates and Terms of Competition

The final, and most important, point, here is that other states will also be trying to establish for themselves some desired level of their exchange rate, and their ability to succeed in this will depend on the corresponding factors in their cases. Levels of exchange rates affect the terms of the competition between different national monopoly capitalist classes, they influence the relative speed at which each class accumulates capital. So there is ample opportunity for acute conflict between monopoly capitalist states. In the interwar period (especially in the 1930s during the Great Depression) this conflict was open and violent: there was a series of competitive devaluations as different states tried not just to accumulate capital faster than their rivals, but by increasing the effective demand for their own products to ensure their very survival.

The interwar period can be contrasted with the period of the Gold Standard, a stable and orderly international monetary system in which all the exchange rates of the major capitalist countries were irrevocably fixed and competition took place strictly within the framework of the existing international monetary system—like competition within a country with a unified currency. The Gold Standard, which can be said to have lasted from about 1881 to 1914, to some extent embodied British economic, or at least financial, supremacy, although this was increasingly being challenged *within* the existing international monetary framework by Germany and the US; and the large scale exports of British capital provided the most important source of liquidity for the financing of the flourishing world trade.

In the interwar period on the other hand there was no accepted international monetary framework; competition involved continual attempts to change exchange rates; and multilateral trade and capital movements were at a much lower level.

II THE PRINCIPLES OF THE BRETTON WOODS SYSTEM

It was against the background of the international monetary chaos of the 1930s that the Allies in the Second World War agreed at Bretton Woods in 1944 to set up what was intended to be an orderly and stable system based on international co-operation and covering the whole of the capitalist world (in fact the Soviet Union attended the original Bretton Woods conference, but it never took up its quota in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or participated in the Bretton Woods system). The commitment to international co-operation was profound: conflict and rivalry was to be confined within the framework of a system which itself would never be allowed to collapse, for it was recognised that its collapse would be extremely harmful to the interests of all monopoly capitalist classes.

The Bretton Woods system was explicitly based on the following principles:

1) that a system of multilateral trade and convertible currencies was desirable;

2) that exchange rate stability was best achieved through a system by which rates were fixed in the short run but could be varied from time to time to deal with "fundamental" disequilibria;

3) that international reserves should be increased so that countries would not be forced to meet short run imbalances by disturbing their domestic economies (i.e. by deflation): the increases in reserves were to come from the issue of IMF Drawing Rights and/or from raising the price of gold to increase the value of existing gold holdings;

4) that balance of payments disequilibria were a two-sided phenomenon, and their correction should be the joint responsibility of surplus and deficit countries: international co-operation on such matters was to be achieved through the International Monetary Fund.

Implications of Bretton Woods

There are four implications of these principles which need to be spelt out. Firstly, fixed exchange rates, together with the relatively low tariff barriers on trade in manufactured goods and most raw materials (resulting from GATT, the formation of EEC and EFTA, the Kennedy Round negotiations, etc.), means that the prices of these commodities will tend to be determined within what is after all

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a relatively integrated world market. There is also a relatively integrated world capital market, due to the competitive pressures exerted by the Euromarkets and the growing importance of arbitrage flows.[2] The markets for agricultural products, on the other hand, are divided by large tariff barriers (e.g. the EEC levies on food imports). But with this significant exception prices in all the advanced capitalist countries (and to a lesser extent in the underdeveloped countries) will tend to move together, so that one such country will have difficulty in maintaining for more than a short period a rate of inflation different from the "world" rate of inflation.

Secondly the possibility of exchange rate changes in cases of "fundamental" disequilibrium results in a certain relationship between the current account balance and the capital account flows: a balance of payments surplus may encourage inflows of short term capital since there will be less likelihood of a devaluation which would reduce the value in other currencies of those short term funds; and it is possible that a surplus will also encourage inflows of long term capital by producing a similar expectation of security. Conversely a balance of payments deficit will stimulate outflows of short (and possibly long) term capital, to avoid the value of such funds in other currencies being reduced by a possible devaluation.

Thirdly, the system of fixed exchange rates provides a link between national money supplies. A balance of payments surplus means that the government (central bank) is making net sales of the domestic currency on the foreign exchange market. A surplus will therefore increase the domestic money supply unless these payments are "sterilised" (neutralised) by sales of securities by the central bank. Similarly a balance of payments deficit will reduce the domestic money supply unless the central bank buys securities in sufficient quantity to offset that reduction. However such open-market operations (i.e. sales and purchases of securities) may become self-defeating. In the case of a deficit governments are likely to welcome the deflationary effects of a reduction in the money supply, so the situation does not arise. But sterilising a substantial surplus may require such large sales of securities by the central bank that the price of those securities will fall; a fall in the price of securities means an implicit rise in the rate of interest, and this will ramify out from the market where it originally occurred so that all interest rates will rise; and that may stimulate an inflow of short term capital ("hot money") which exacerbates the surplus and defeats the central bank's attempts to prevent the money supply rising. This process has in fact forced a number of revaluations (of the German mark and the Dutch guilder for example) in the last few years.

Fourthly, fixed exchange rates involve the possibility of a conflict between the desire for full employment and the desire to avoid a balance of payments deficit: if governments are unable or unwilling to change their exchange rate in response to a deficit they may feel themselves forced to reduce the level of activity in their economies in order to reduce imports and eliminate the deficit. This reduction in the level of economic activity means a loss of output at the time and possibly a permanent reduction in rate of growth. Increased unemployment may strengthen the bargaining power of employers vis-à-vis workers, but it is important to note that the governments of all the advanced capitalist countries became committed to "full employment" during or after the Second World War, under pressure from their working classes who were determined to prevent a return to the widespread unemployment of the 1930s.

III THE BRETTON WOODS SYSTEM IN PRACTICE

In practice the Bretton Woods system did not function as had been envisaged. Gold reserves grew only slightly in volume, due to increasing industrial demand and relatively low production. The system itself failed to provide the "needed" international liquidity (there has been much inconclusive argument about how international liquidity needs should be measured) either by the issue of sufficient IMF Drawing Rights or by a rise in the price of gold: both measures would have required a degree of political agreement which did not exist. And so the main addition to international liquidity was in fact the supply of US dollars from US balance of payments deficits.

The system failed to provide an effective mechanism for the correction of "fundamental" disequilibria because most of the capitalist governments concerned tended to try to maintain the existing structure of parities rather than open up the possibility of a return to the competitive devaluations of the 1930s. For obvious reasons it proved impossible to produce an objective definition of "fundamental" disequilibrium, and it was easier to keep existing parities than agree on new ones. So the system developed a bias towards the use of piecemeal measures such as deflation ("stop-go" in the UK) and capital controls. It also failed to provide confidence in the major world currencies because the "speculators" were in effect all too aware of the conflict between governments over the correct level of exchange rates.

These speculators are mainly the multinational companies with large reserves of cash available for

[2] Movements of short-term capital trying to take advantage of, and therefore tending to eliminate, variations in interest rates between different financial centres.

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short term lending wherever interest rates (adjusted to take account of the probability of exchange rate changes) are highest. Speculation can always be prevented from forcing a change in the exchange rate by swap arrangements between central banks and the recycling of foreign exchange: this involves some minor technical problems but requires a degree of political co-operation which may not be obtainable. And in fact the immediate cause of many of the relatively few currency realignments which took place between 1949 and 1971 was the sudden outflows or inflows of "hot money", the amount of which has been growing rapidly with the development of the Euromarkets, in the absence of such political co-operation.

US Balance of Payments

Immediately after the Second World War the US economy was far stronger than any other capitalist economy, and this was reflected in the "dollar shortage" (i.e. US balance of payments surpluses, European and Japanese deficits) as the European countries and Japan made heavy purchases from the US of capital equipment for reconstruction purposes and of the consumption goods which they were still unable to produce in sufficient quantity. Initially US capital exports had been relatively small. The US had taken a rather laissez-faire attitude to the postwar economic difficulties of the Allied and Axis countries in Western Europe and Japan, but soon it was forced to take an active part in building up those economies to strengthen its own position against the socialist countries. However US aid to these economies contributed to their rapid growth and eventually to their posing a threat to US hegemony itself.

When the US current account surpluses came to be offset by increasing capital exports and overseas government expenditure—Marshall Aid, Cold War military expenditure, and from the mid-1950s direct foreign investment—this was at first welcomed by the other advanced capitalist countries which had current account deficits with the US.

When the US capital account deficit increased, particularly with increasing capital exports now taking the form of the buying up of already existing European companies rather than the construction of additional productive capacity, and when the US current account surplus decreased as the other advanced capitalist countries recovered from the effects of the war and indeed (with the exception of the UK) were now growing at a substantially higher rate than the US, the US balance of payments went into overall deficit. And this again was at first welcomed by the other countries which wanted to rebuild their depleted reserves of foreign exchange.

The US Deficits

However as the "dollar shortage" turned into a "dollar glut", the European countries became increasingly resentful of the US deficits, which meant in effect that the US was printing dollars and using them to buy up European industry (Japan had strict laws against foreign investment). In the mid-1960s France, the FRG and other countries began systematically presenting their dollar holdings in the US for conversion into gold. Before this the ratio of US holdings of gold and foreign exchange to US dollar liabilities had been falling because the latter was increasing: now the former began to decrease as well. This process of converting excess holdings of dollars into gold was adopted as a method of putting pressure on the US, and it was the decline in the US assets/liabilities ratio which led eventually to the "loss of confidence" in the dollar.

Until the mid-1960s the US maintained a relatively low level of employment (that is, about 4 per cent unemployment compared to 1-2 per cent in most of the other advanced capitalist countries) in order to preserve price stability. The mid-1960s was a time of internal unrest in the form of "race riots", opposition to the Vietnam War, etc. US capital exports were running at a high level. And it was at this time that the cost of the Vietnam War escalated dramatically as the US committed larger and larger quantitites of troops and equipment to the fight against the National Liberation Front and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. This imperialist war was enormously expensive in terms of both domestic and foreign resources, and the money to finance it had to come from somewhere.

The US had three alternatives. The first was substantial increases in taxation, which would have put the burden of the war onto the working people of the US via lower real (net) wages and slower economic growth; but this was extremely undesirable in the context of the internal unrest (indeed the desire of the US government and the decision which it actually took was to expand the level of economic activity in the US and to maintain a higher level of employment than that of the preceding period). This policy would also have led to an increase in the US deficit, although not as big an increase as that which actually occurred. The deficit could have been corrected by devaluation, which would have had only a small effect in raising the price level, but devaluation would have put US capitalism in a worse position as regards its buying up of European industry, and was therefore undesirable.

The second alternative was to share the burden of the Vietnam War with the other advanced capitalist countries through some form of inter-imperialist agreement—for example by the participation of French, British and other troops in the

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war. But those countries, and particularly France, were strongly opposed to this, and in any case it would have been difficult to arrange for such a contribution from the FGR and Japan, the US's main rivals and countries whose fast economic growth may have been partly due to the smallness of their military expenditures in relation to national income.

However there was a third alternative which presented none of these drawbacks: the US could finance the war by monetary expansion and take advantage of the reserve currency status of the dollar to ignore the rapidly growing payments deficits which would result from this. This would mean that the US was absorbing real resources from the other advanced capitalist countries at no cost to itself. In other words this was a method of sharing the burden of the Vietnam war with those countries without requiring their agreement. It seems that the US government therefore decided (a) to finance the war by monetary expansion, (b) to ignore the deficits arising from the continuing capital exports and the greatly increased overseas military expenditure, and (c) actually to increase the level of economic activity to reduce unemployment, ignoring both the tendency for domestic inflation (from excess demand) and the increased balance of payments deficits which would result from this.

The Euro-Dollar Market

US balance of payments deficits meant surpluses for the West European countries and Japan, and by their surpluses the latter were losing real resources to the US in exchange for the doubtful benefit of accumulating paper dollars. Once their reserves had been built up to desired levels (by the mid-1960s) there was nothing to be gained from further increasing them, especially in a situation where the US ratio of gold holdings to dollar liabilities was decreasing rapidly and approaching unity. This situation was basically a result of the US deficits, but their impact was being greatly increased by the Euro-dollar market.

The latter had come into existence partly as a way of circumventing some controls on capital exports imposed by the US in the early 1960s in an attempt to correct its balance of payments deficits. (It had also received initial impetus from the decisions of Soviet and East European banks to keep in Europe rather than in the US, and use for short term lending, the dollar reserves they held to finance their trade, in order to avoid possible confiscation by the US government.) Thus the Euro-dollar market (and later the Euro-markets for other currencies) was outside the control of any single national government, and functioned as an alternative to and competitor of the various national capital markets. A major source of funds for the Euro-dollar market was dollars from Japanese balance of payments surpluses channeled to the market by Japanese banks: these dollars were then lent in the usual way and the process of credit creation expanded total US dollar liabilities much faster than the continuing US deficits.

IV INFLATION AND THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY CRISIS

As the gold backing of the dollar became weaker it became more probable that the dollar would at some stage have to be devalued (although the US was still totally opposed to this), in which case dollar holdings would fall in value. So the surplus countries had a strong reason for not wishing to continue their surpluses: those surpluses meant a loss of real resources in exchange for paper dollars which were worthless in the short run and of increasingly doubtful value in the long run. Balance of payments surpluses can be reduced either by revaluing (under certain conditions) or by expanding the level of economic activity, which increases current account imports.

It seems these countries were unwilling to revalue, because of the tendency to try to maintain the existing structure of parities and because they would not have wished to offset what might only be a temporary surplus (since it depended on US policy) by a rather more permanent shift in the terms of competition. Furthermore the governments of all the advanced capitalist countries have been committed since the Second World War to the goal of full employment, and the obstacle to this has traditionally been the balance of payments deficit likely to result from a high level of employment in an unplanned capitalist economy. In a situation of surplus this obstacle no longer existed. Thus the surplus countries had a strong incentive to expand the level of economic activity and employment in their economies, in order to avoid the disadvantageous balance of payments surpluses which resulted from US policy.

US Inflation Transmitted

The US decision in the mid-1960s to expand the level of economic activity represented a partial abandonment of the commitment to price stability maintained by the US government throughout the 1950s and early 1960s. The "overheating" in the US economy was bound to lead to increased inflation in the US and this was bound to be transmitted to other countries to some extent, in view of the overwhelming size of the US economy in relation to the advanced capitalist countries as a whole: increased US demand for raw materials would tend to raise their world prices, while higher prices of US intermediate and capital goods exports would also increase costs for manufacturers in other countries, and together with the higher prices of US final

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goods would have a "permissive" effect on the prices of rival oligopolies in the other advanced capitalist countries. Inflation in the US was bound to raise US interest rates, and the higher interest rates would be transmitted to other countries via the competitive pressures exerted by the Euro-markets.

The US deficits would also have directly expansionary effects on many of these countries. The link between national money supplies meant that the surplus countries were receiving a substantial expansionary impulse from their large surpluses. So it would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, for them to prevent increased inflation and expansion of their economies, even if they had wanted to: that is, even if they were prepared to continue losing real resources to the US in exchange for paper dollars which were worthless in the short term and were in increasing danger of being reduced in value for the long term by a dollar devaluation.

Domestic Inflation

The deficit countries (other than the US) did not have the same problem of retaining control over an expanding money supply and an expanding economy, since unsterilised deficits reduce the domestic money supply. But the influence of the integration of world markets was strong enough to ensure that a considerable part of the "world" rate of inflation (depending on the openness of the economy) would be translated into domestic inflation. So the alternative for deficit countries was not full employment with inflation or low employment without inflation, but full or low employment with more or less the same rate of inflation. If a government tried to cut inflation by increased unemployment the country would suffer economic stagnation but with nearly the same rate of inflation. So there was a strong incentive for the governments of deficit countries to accept the approximate level of "world" inflation and themselves provide (via budget deficits or monetary expansion) the necessary increase in the domestic money supply.

Thus both surplus and deficit countries permitted or deliberately caused an expansion in their levels of economic activity. This expansion then produced "overheating" and increased the inflationary tendencies in their own and other economies, adding to the inflation which had its origin in the "overheating" of the US economy.

At the same time the US ratio of gold and foreign exchange assets to dollar liabilities had fallen and was still falling so rapidly that the "speculators" increasingly "lost confidence" in the continuation of the existing parity of the dollar with other currencies and later with gold. Speculative movements into gold forced the adoption of the two-tier gold market in 1968, an arrangement by which central banks ceased to intervene in the private gold market to maintain the price of gold (which would have required large and continuing sales of gold out of official reserves) but continued to trade in gold with each other at the fixed (dollar) price. Speculation should be seen as a manifestation of the fragmentation of capitalist cohesion on the national and international levels. It is not an autonomous force: "loss of confidence" and speculative movements of "hot money" out of dollars were obviously stimulated by the evident disbelief of the French and other governments in the possibility of maintaining the dollar's position, and their proposals and pressures for reform of the international monetary system, either by raising the price of gold to increase the nominal value of gold reserves or by the large scale issue of Special Drawing Rights, in order to provide an alternative source of international liquidity and to eliminate the position of the dollar as a reserve currency and the advantages which gave to the US (what *Financial Times* columnists refer to as "dollar imperialism").

"Dirty" Floats

Eventually Nixon announced the suspension of the convertibility of dollars into gold, and a series of policy measures including surcharges and quotas on imports into the US, in an attempt to force other countries, especially the FGR and Japan, to revalue: this would have provided a temporary solution to the crisis without touching the basic position of the dollar in any way. A few months later, in December 1971, there was the "Smithsonian" realignment of the major currencies. But this was short-lived.

Since then there have been further realignments and finally the end of all attempts to perpetuate the Bretton Woods system as such: now all major currencies are "floating". These floats are, and always will be, "dirty" floats—i.e. with government intervention in the foreign exchange market—because monopoly capitalist states cannot afford to abandon the attempt to control their exchange rates, because of the influence of the level of the exchange rate on the accumulation of capital. The EEC countries' attempt to fix the parities between their currencies as a prelude to monetary integration (scheduled for 1980) had been severely disrupted even before the latest blow, when the French government decided to float the franc, and the whole scheme for monetary union may well collapse entirely as a result of the international monetary crisis.

It is often suggested now that a period of competitive devaluations (or revaluations) is about to begin—indeed it has done so to a limited extent already. Thus the same US policies which led to an increase in inflation throughout the capitalist world have also led to the breakdown of the Bretton Woods system.

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Disruption of International Monetary System

The dollar has in the end been devalued and the US balance of payments is at present in a much stronger position—and will be less adversely affected by the recent raising of the oil price than that of any of the other advanced capitalist countries. It is now clear that the US, which did at one time talk about fundamental reform of the international monetary system, has in fact intended all along to preserve the reserve currency status of the dollar. Each further IMF conference makes it more obvious that the conflicts between the US and the other advanced capitalist countries (who by no means agree among themselves) are no nearer resolution. Until they are resolved, however, something like the present rate of inflation can be expected to continue.

The US balance of payments moved into surplus in 1973, although it is now expected to show a small deficit for 1974 as a result of the oil price increases, but even a large US surplus would now have little impact on the inflation since there are now other countries with substantial deficits (at present Japan, Italy and the UK). These deficits mean that third countries, e.g. the FGR, continue to run large surpluses, while the deficit countries act to prevent substantial contractions in their money supplies. The disorganisation of the international monetary system has produced a situation where the absolute size of surpluses and deficits is much larger than it used to be—for example the UK deficit for January 1974 was about ten times the May 1970 (pre-election) deficit, which was then considered large.

These surpluses provide the basis for further multiplication of the international money supply through the Euromarkets, which have grown enormously in the last few years and are expected to continue to grow, with Japan being replaced by the oil countries as the major provider of funds from balance of payments surpluses. Euromarket loans provide capital import to the borrowing country without constituting a capital export to any other country: so they are a net addition to the international money supply.

Since 1971 there has been a lower level of economic activity in the advanced capitalist countries as a whole, but the disruption of the international monetary system and the growth of the Euromarkets have provided such a growth in the international money supply that the inflation has continued. There is now the additional factor that a high rate of inflation is widely expected to continue, so that companies will go on raising their prices to cover expected increases in costs, and workers will try to allow for the expected inflation in their wage claims (i.e. they will claim a higher nominal wage rise in order to obtain the same real wage rise).

The inflation which is connected with the international monetary crisis could be reduced and virtually eliminated within the capitalist system—but this would require (a) fundamental reform of the international monetary system to create a stable system where the absolute size of total deficits and surpluses of all countries was much smaller than now, and where speculative flows of "hot money" were closely controlled if not actually eliminated; and (b) the ending of the Euromarkets as autonomous forces outside the control of national governments, increasing the international money supply and contributing a large proportion of the "hot money" flows. But these two conditions require a degree of co-operation between the advanced capitalist countries which is most unlikely to emerge in the near future.

Indeed it will only emerge either as a result of the resolution of the conflicts between the various advanced capitalist countries and the establishment of some new accepted hierarchy among them; or in response to the appearance of some external or internal threat to the capitalist system itself, so powerful that all the monopoly capitalist states pool their differences in the overriding necessity to protect and maintain that system. Neither of these is likely in the near future.

Line of Argument Summarised

In conclusion the main line of the argument can be summarised as follows. Towards the end of the Second World War agreement was reached between the Allies on a new international monetary system based on fixed, but not irrevocably fixed, exchange rates and designed to promote multilateral trade and capital flows. The position of the US as the major capitalist economy in the world and as the provider (for strategic reasons) of aid to war-devastated European and Japanese monopoly capitalism, together with the "flexibility" of the provisions of the Bretton Woods agreement, gave the US the unique privilege of being able to ignore its balance of payments deficits because the dollar was a reserve currency. By the mid-1960s the West European and Japanese economies had recovered from the war, were growing faster than the US and were challenging the US's right to dominate the capitalist world and to the seigniorage profits[3] on the reserve-currency status of the dollar.

Unable to get the help of the other advanced capitalist countries in what it considered the strategically important Vietnam war, unwilling to increase internal discontent in the US by increasing taxation, and unwilling to sacrifice its takeover of European industry, US capitalism chose to finance the war by

[3] The profits which accrue to the issuer of a token-money currency, which consist of the face value of the currency less the cost of production of the currency (i.e. paper and printing costs).

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monetary expansion. This policy led to overheating and inflation in the US, and large US balance of payments deficits, which meant that the US was absorbing real resources from the other advanced capitalist countries at no cost to itself, i.e. that some of the burden of the Vietnam war had effectively been shifted onto those countries.

The US deficits, compounded by the Euromarkets, produced a rapid growth in the international money supply which, together with the tendency for prices to be determined in world markets, transmitted the inflation to the other advanced capitalist countries. The increase in economic activity in the latter, permitted or deliberately created by government policy in order to avoid either the loss of real resources to the US or unnecessary stagnation, gave a further impetus to the inflation.

At the same time the decline in the gold backing of the dollar and European attempts to force a restructuring of the international monetary system led to increased speculation against the dollar and a series of crises including short-lived realignments of the major currencies and ending (to date) with the "dirty" floating of all the major currencies. There is now a lower level of economic activity in the advanced capitalist countries as a whole, but all social classes now expect present inflation rates to continue and their expectations will tend to maintain those rates.

Furthermore, until the international monetary crisis is resolved substantial balance of payments surpluses will continue to provide the basis for rapid growth of the international money supply. Inter-imperialist co-operation remains strong enough to prevent the final collapse of international monetary relations, but the crisis will not be resolved until inter-imperialist conflicts are settled one way or the other, or some overwhelming threat to the capitalist system itself results in the shelving of inter-imperialist rivalry in an attempt to preserve that system at all costs.

V POSSIBLE OBJECTIONS

(a) Monetarism

A number of objections will no doubt be made to this analysis of inflation. Firstly, it will be argued that insofar as this is a monetarist explanation of inflation it confuses cause with effect and that the expansion of the world money supply is the effect not the cause of inflation.[4] British Marxist economists have traditionally been hostile to all monetarist analyses, an attitude historically connected with the coincidence in bourgeois economics of monetarist and neo-classical tendencies.

However it can be argued that some of the monetarist position is theoretically and practically separable from neo-classical views, and the foregoing analysis should have demonstrated that money and the money supply is a *political* question: to argue that monetarists must be wrong because they see (for example) inflation as a technical problem stemming from miscontrol of the money supply, is to accept Friedman's definition of the problem as a technical one. Accepting some monetarist ideas does not involve for example the acceptance of the neo-classical theory of wage-determination: Johnson says: "if . . . the world market for manufactures and primary commodities is assumed to be integrated, prices and wages in individual countries will tend to adjust directly to world market levels for prices and comparative-efficiency levels for wages. . . ."[5] and one can accept the adjustment of prices in this way without in any way accepting similar automatic adjustment of wages to "comparative-efficiency levels".

Friedman's redefinition of the quantity theory of money says that the quantity of money which "people" wish to hold is a stable function of actual and expected interest rates, the level of real income, the level of prices and the expected rate of inflation. All this means is that if individuals or companies find themselves with more money than they "wish to hold" they will get rid of the excess by spending it or lending it. Borrowers (if there are "people" wishing to borrow money) will spend the money, and so either way the money will end up as increased demand for goods and services.

This increased demand will apply (not necessarily equally) to all goods and services since if (for example) an individual is now able to obtain credit to buy consumer durables, his purchases of them will not require the same reduction in his purchases of other goods. Now if this increased demand cannot be satisfied by increased supply because of capacity constraints, then prices will tend to rise. There really is nothing controversial about the last point. And it is difficult to see any *a priori* reason why "people" should wish to hold more than a certain amount of money when commodities can be purchased with that money or interest can be received on it if it is lent—and it is probable that companies have become much more conscious of this in the last two decades, during which the short term loan market has grown enormously: "hot money" itself is a manifestation of this awareness. It is quite unnecessary for the theory of inflation presented here,

[4] See for example Labour Research Department, *Inflation*, (London, 1973) pp. 13-14. See also Pat Devine "Inflation and Marxist Theory", *Marxism Today*, March 1974, p. 87.

[5] H. G. Johnson, *Further Essays in Monetary Economics* (Allen & Unwin, London, 1973), p. 335.

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to argue that there is a strict mathematical, "mystical" relationship between the money supply and the price level; all that is required is that an expansion of the money supply should lead to increased expenditure which, when supply is unable to increase in the short term, will lead to a rise in prices.

Nor should it be assumed that the money supply can be easily or precisely controlled even in the absence of balance of payments surpluses or deficits too large to be sterilised. The money supply is an extremely complex bundle of different forms of money, some of which (e.g. clearing bank advances before Competition and Credit Control) can sometimes be more easily controlled than others (e.g. secondary bank advances before CCC).

It is not surprising that Friedman has called for a system in which banks maintain a 100 per cent assets/liabilities ratio,[6] or that British monetarists have criticised the Competition and Credit Control measures of September 1971 in the UK (which facilitated an enormous increase in bank lending) on the grounds that "reserve assets" are not strictly enough defined to prevent the different sectors of the banking system between them creating their own "reserve assets".[7] The state's ability to control the money supply (in the absence of balance of payments disequilibria) should be seen as a function of the relative importance and power of the different groups within the monopoly capitalist class, of the organisation, discipline and hegemony of that class.

(b) Trade Unions and the Class Struggle

The second major possible objection is that this analysis of inflation ignores the role of trade unions and indeed the class struggle between labour and capital itself. Such an objection would be misplaced. The analysis presented here does not deny that at some times and in some places trade unions, state expenditures or other internal factors may have had an independent role in the initiation of inflation. What it does argue is that the source of the acceleration of inflation since 1968 is to be found not in the class struggle between labour and capital in any one country or in all countries, but in inter-imperialist rivalry, that is to say rivalry between the different national monopoly capitalist classes which are the dominant classes in the various advanced capitalist countries.

Once inflation at such a rate begins, however, the role of the trade unions is crucial in the diffusion of inflation into all sectors of the economy as workers respond to the reduction in real wages produced by higher prices by fighting for higher money wages. This spreads the inflation via increased labour costs to sectors of the economy where no excess demand exists and to the "non-traded goods sector" which would not feel the impact of movements in the world price level.

Inflation is similarly diffused by increases in the prices of raw materials and intermediate goods used in those and other sectors. The crucial difference between increases in labour costs and increases in raw material and intermediate goods costs is that it may be much easier, for individual capitalists and for a national capitalist class as a whole, to prevent a substantial rise in labour costs without having to accept a reduction in the supply of labour.

In an inflation of the current rate there is of course no reduction in the class struggle between labour and capital, and indeed there is likely to be an intensification of it. If companies can avoid, reduce or postpone increases in wages in order to increase profits (given prices), and if they can raise prices to prevent unavoidable increases in their costs from eroding their profit margins, they will have the same incentive for doing so as in a situation of low or zero inflation. Incomes policies such as those of the late Tory government and the preceding Labour government are part of the class struggle.

Pat Devine has recently argued that incomes policies are concerned with "the practical task of managing state monopoly capitalism", and that they *are* intended to reduce inflation, although they will not succeed in the long term because they are "based on a faulty analysis of social reality".[8] I would argue that there is another explanation for the support of politicians and employers in the UK for incomes policies: the present inflation is the result of an intensification of inter-imperialist rivalry; British capitalism is in a weak position vis-a-vis the other advanced capitalist countries (for historical reasons), and therefore it has to try to defend its international position by acting on its internal cost structure.

Prices and incomes policies are aimed at reducing the level of real wages, or at least reducing the rate of growth of real wages, and shifting the distribution of income in favour of profits; and the "price restraint" involved is a fraud, whether the politicians and civil servants engaged in its implementation realise it or not. Since it does not tackle the real causes of inflation and is limited to one particular country (which has an extremely open economy), it is *incapable* of reducing inflation to a significant degree or for a significant period of time, and it can be "blown off course" at any moment—which is what

(*completed on p. 221*)

[6] M. Friedman, "A Monetary and Fiscal Framework for Economic Stability", *American Economic Review*, 1948.

[7] See for example E. V. Morgan and R. L. Harrington, "Reserve Assets and the Supply of Money", *Manchester School*, March 1973.

[8] *Marxism Today*, March 1974, p. 88.

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Reviews and Re-Estimations:

The Art History of T. J. Clark[1]

Ray Watkinson

The period and generation which gave us Courbet and Baudelaire in France, and in Britain, Ford Madox Brown, George Eliot and Ruskin—gave us also the beginnings of scientific social research and the notion of history as embracing the whole of society from the bottom up, labourer as well as Emperor, Samuel Crompton at his mule as well as Cortes upon his peak in Darien; above all, the thoughts of Marx and Engels.

And after Macaulay had created Whig history for the new-fangled men, another historian, John Richard Green, High Anglican priest of Hoxton and Stepney, began to write history not only of but for the common people. He was, as Macaulay was not, deeply critical of his age, and was one of the few people in this country to recognise, at the very moment of the events, the full meaning of the Paris Commune, and to express himself clearly and absolutely on the side of the Communards.

"Besides my book," he wrote from Florence to his fellow historian Freeman, in 1872, "I am doing little save Florentine reading, for the most part about painters and sculptors whom I want to weave into my notion of certain periods of Florentine history. For whatever you may make of England, it is absolutely madness to try and dissociate the social and aesthetic from the political here." It is in Green's spirit that the two books, *Image of the People*, and *The Absolute Bourgeois*, self-contained but mutually supporting are written. Art historical studies of a rare, but not absolutely new kind, their original and penetrating examination of the new painting emerging in Paris between 1848 and 1851, will have a radical effect on any subsequent studies in the field, and not in studies of the nineteenth century, nor art history, alone: they are models of what art history should be.

Art History

The history of art has too often been abstracted, taken on an imagined plane of absolute scholarly elevation which removes it from the realities of human life not only as it flows around us in our living present, but from the realities of the life which created it in the past which is the source of historical study. This is in no area more true than in that of visual and plastic works; wordless, they are at the mercy of the unscrupulous and insensitive in ways that documentary sources are not: ambiguous in the essence of their making, they lend themselves to misconception and falsification: displayed in galleries, they occupy situations so totally different from those for which they were conceived, and above all so far removed from any ostensible use, that it is all too easy for us to be deceived about them.

Art history—in this narrow sense of the visual arts—has undergone many changes since the days of such scholars as von Rumohr and his painter contemporary Passavant: and the German scholarship of the nineteenth century which they heralded did more than any other factor to lift the study of art from dilettante connoisseurship to a more scientific and objective state. Waagen, Kügler, Burckhardt and others followed: but artist-scholars and historians in this country too played a major part in the definition of this new and important field: Eastlake and his wife, Elizabeth Rigby: Anna Jameson (daughter of an Irish painter who was the friend both of Wolfe Tone and Thomas Bewick), Crowe and Cavalcaselle; Lord Lindsay, Stirling on Spanish painting, George Edmund Street, the master of William Morris, on Spanish Gothic, all produced books which remain authoritative, indispensable sources even under the correction of modern research. Above all they began to offer an effective alternative to the taste-ridden accounts of the lives of the artists, the inquiries into the sublime and the beautiful, previously available. But they produced also a disease of their own. The microscopic examination of documentation, without the least response to the actual work of art or the least acknowledgement of the social order behind it, is a process which may turn up invaluable facts for the art historian—and not him alone—but which is neither the study of history nor the study of art. And alongside of this, in the present century, we have had more than enough over-reaction to it

[1] T. J. Clark — *Image of the People: Gustave Courbet and the 1848 Revolution*, Thames and Hudson, £4.50.

T. J. Clark — *The Absolute Bourgeois: Artists and Politics in France 1848-1851*, Thames and Hudson £4.50.

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in the lofty connoisseurship of the Berensons, the hyper-subjectivism of the Reads, as well as much merely mechanical so-called Marxist criticism.

In so far as the minutely researched archive-combing has provided us with method and technique, has put at our disposal a mass of detailed, authenticated and well-organised material, it has of course been invaluable; for ideas must in the end be derived from facts and the concept of the inviolability of the record is a necessary critical base, whatever insights and theoretical concepts we may bring to our art history. But this idea alone begs essential questions. *What* facts, *what* inquiries, *what* categories, are necessary to our research? Papal and ducal records, inventories of royal collections and the purchases of oil tycoons; the furnishings of great households, contacts between churchmen and craftsmen, painters and their patrons; letters and journals, writs for debt, legal reports, shop accounts and workbooks, bills and conveyances, wills and press reports—all this archive material is constantly quarried and raked over for illuminating grains of fact, for its revelation of possible patterns of relationship between people and the things we call works of art. And however often the same material may be raked over by another hand, each time this is done, new illumination is the reward, if not to the man with the muckrake himself, then to the onlooker: even the simplest fact is not exhausted by a single look. Historical research, historical meaning, are not only a matter of fact but of focus. Facts may be neutral, susceptible of rational and objective assessment; but we ourselves are not neutral before them, nor can the totally neutral stance elicit more than a fraction of available truth.

Connections of Art and Politics

Clark's two books, one dealing particularly with Gustave Courbet and Charles Baudelaire, the other more at large with art and politics of metropolitan Paris and rural France at the critical mid-century, in the Year of Revolutions, are admirable examples of the importance of focus not only for interpretation, but for the rudimentary production of relevant information.

Their style is energetic and lively; the author has his case to make and is committed to it: but neither enthusiasm for merit of works which he clearly admires (for he will say so and why) nor his concern to demonstrate the political content of prints, paintings, sculptures and poems, undermines or overrides the sobriety of his actual examination of identified works. Not the least merit of that examination is that, though he will elicit from the surface and forms of the work, the ways in which the artist penetrates and expresses his subject—the actual business of making a physical object to convey meaning—he does not rely on the methods of connoisseurship or concentrate on the prestigious works of acknowledged masters. For this sort of examination, the banal and the anonymous, the ephemeral print and the abandoned sketch, are as valuable as the classic work which, like Delacroix's *Liberty Leading the People*, not only were seen and made their impact at the time of making, but have since taken their place among the memorable emblems of that time both as historic witness and as works art. Clark does indeed look at that particular painting—as how could he not?—and others like it; and out of that examination he offers the original and utterly right notion of the barricade as the special symbol of revolution in the mid-nineteenth century: but he offers no illusions about the simplicity of commitment of even the most committed either in art or revolution. Baudelaire elaborated the doctrine of 'art for art's sake' —but he fought on the barricades in 1848: Courbet, flaunting his realist doctrine of art and his socialism and in 1871 a member of the Commune, seems not to have been at Baudelaire's side.

Clark is concerned to demonstrate the complexity of the connections between art and politics; he has concerned himself in some detail with Baudelaire and Courbet, with the real nature of Courbet's socially critical, revolutionary stance, and with the character of his new, revolutionary art—the revolutionary quality of which consisted by no means only in its subject matter, its postures its defiant manners, but as much in the sources, not necessarily revolutionary, on which it drew. "We shall not understand Delacroix or Daumier or Baudelaire," Clark says, "until we put back the doubt into revolution, put back confusion and uncertainty, a sense that everything was at risk. All the signs could be read two ways."

But Clark takes others than these into account: not only the aggressive Courbet, but the conservative, rural-religious Millet: Daumier the devoted old-style republican, whose exposure of facts we take as caricatures: Ingres, survivor of the days of David and the first Napoleon: aristocratic Delacroix, and respectable Thomas Couture: he brings as witness too the anonymous makers of country woodcuts and broadsheets, the writers in the provincial press, the drawings and paintings of failed and forgotten artists, the lithographs of the Paris magazines, the stock religious paintings handed out to country parishes by the Ministry of Fine Arts.

In Terms of Painting

This sort of evidence is of the highest im-

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portance, as is that of the letters and petitions of artists, the contemporary criticisms of their works, their success or failure in getting their paintings into the Salon, in making and maintaining sales. It enables us to assess the meaning which political events had for the artists and their patrons, and for those who were neither artists nor patrons; the new masses of the day, the heavily taxed and church-ridden peasants, the new-come bourgeoisie of Paris, first generation citizens of the metropolis, children (as were Courbet, Cézanne, Zola) of well-to-do provincial farmers, bankers, civil servants, lawyers: grasping peasants at one remove; kulaks, precisely, without sophistication, without taste, elbowing their way into society and if possible into political power. What kind of political art could be attempted, how could any political art succeed—and with whom—how much could paintings, in particular, bear the full content of the times and throw up images of power and lasting validity? In asking and answering, if obliquely, these questions, which might often appear to be answered simply in terms of ideological and sociological examination, Clark never forgets that the particular art at which he is looking is that of the painter, nor to look at it in terms of how painting is actually made: this is no mere transference of literary criticism into the art gallery; it is a real examination of what the paintings have to say about the real world that made them, in terms of visual image and metaphor: a performance all too rare and much to be acclaimed.

The Expressionist Vision

James Pettifer

Of all the modernist literary and artistic movements that took place at the beginning of the century, the German Expressionist movement is probably the least known in Britain and also perhaps the most difficult to categorise. Unlike the Cubists or the Italian Futurists, it did not aspire to become a school and most of its participants would have been unaware of their designation as Expressionists. It encompassed a wide range of artistic activities, particularly in painting, poetry and drama but also affecting architecture and the cinema.

The first usage of the term "Expressionist" is much earlier than the movement itself, being defined in a lecture by Charles Rowley in Manchester in 1880 as "those who undertake to express particular emotions". Despite its vagueness, this offers a practical indication of the content of the concept, as a reaction against the phoney objectivity of the photographic naturalism and impressionism that dominated artistic activity in the last decades of the nineteenth century.

Paul Raabe's book[1] offers an unprecedented opportunity to read original texts on the movement, generally in the form of recollections by participants. It can be seen from the book that the works the movement produced are not of antiquarian interest only to art historians and literary critics but should be seen as the source of many contemporary developments in the arts and raise a number of issues concerning the position of the artist in revolt against bourgeois society of particular interest to Marxists.

The Vision of Doom

A generation of German artists and poets saw, in and around 1910, a vision of the consequences of competing imperialisms that manifested themselves in the World War. Their view of Wilhelmite bourgeois society was confused and, generally speaking, tinged with mysticism. But of one thing they were sure, that the existing order under the Kaiser was heading for its downfall. On the other hand, they did not have a clear idea of what was to replace it. Jacob Van Hoddis's *Weltende* was one of the most typical poems of the early period of Expressionism:

> "Dem Burger fliegt vom spitzen Kopf der Hut,
> in allen Luften hallt es wie Geschrei.
> Dachdecker sturzen ab und gehn entzwei
> und an den Kusten-liest man-steigt die Flut."
>
> (The bourgeois's hat leaps off his pointed head,
> the air all around is echoing with shouts.
> Tiles fall from the roofs, and break apart.
> Along the coast (I hear) the tide's in flood.)

The confidence of the Expressionists in the downfall of bourgeois society was not shared by

[1] *The Era of German Expressionism*, edited by Paul Raabe, Calder and Boyars, £6.95.

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the leaders of the German Social Democratic Party at the time. But there were other elements in the leadership of the German working class who had not given way to revisionism. Among the contributions to *Die Aktion*—the main avant-garde journal of the movement when it was founded in 1910—were Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg.

Claire Jung remembers, in a way perhaps indicative of the genuine but naive admiration felt by the Expressionist milieu towards revolutionary Marxists: "In this way I once met Rosa Luxemburg in the dark corridor of the apartment; she was just coming as I was going. Pfemfert introduced me and for a moment she gave me her hand and looked at me. Knowing of her speeches and writings without, I must admit, having the slightest idea of their political significance, I was still surprised by her politeness and delicacy." The transformation of society that Luxemburg worked for was widely supported by the Expressionists as the war dragged on and patriotic enthusiasms dwindled.

Man—the Future

The characteristic note of the movement from about 1915 onwards, at least as far as its main spokesmen were concerned, is one of cosmic humanitarianism, of a powerful affirmation of faith in a regenerated human race. Johannes Becher, in later years the first Minister of Culture in the German Democratic Republic wrote:

> "Tretet an den Marsch! Freiheit auf die Fahnen!!
> Dich antike Welt zertrummere solcher Schwung!
> Ein Gestirn enttaucht, kreuzt ob unserem Plan:
> Himmel der Verbruderung."
>
> (Join in the march! Write Freedom on our banners!!
> Our rhythm smash thee, ancient world, for good!
> A star looms up. Mark above our plan:
> Paradise of Brotherhood.)

A great belief in the power of art as a force for the revolutionary transformation of society is implicit in the writing of such verse. (Although it could be said that the sentiments were also being put into verse by other poets at the same time who were less politically committed than Becher; for instance Apollinaire's "A la fin tu es las de ce monde ancien.")

In the objective conditions that actually existed in the country, the "Paradise of Brotherhood" seemed further off, and the optimism of the now-Marxist Expressionists found its opposite in the nihilistic Dada movements that flourished for a short time at the end of the war. It became increasingly clear, however, to most artists involved in Expressionist production that the collapse of Germany in 1918 forced them to make a definite choice between the standpoints open to them, either of support for the working class struggle or indifference to the forces of reaction, and ultimately, Fascism. A few made the latter choice, notably the distinguished poet, Gottfried Benn, while the majority allied themselves with the Left. Some, like the Expressionist dramatist Ernst Toller were jailed for their activities during the Spartacist uprising. Later, Herwath Walden, the editor of the artist's magazine *Die Sturm* left Germany altogether for work in the Soviet Union.

Wieland Herzfelde recollects "In 1916 we were few in numbers. And—though our isolation hurt us deeply—we were proud of our scarcity value, proud of what we considered to be our exemplary attitude. We appealed to all, but really only to 'the ones who mattered'. The October Revolution taught us that these are not few, not some special elite."

The varied discoveries in the field of artistic technique remain for study in the works that survived the ravages of Fascism in the form of Hitler's destruction of "degenerate art". The recollections found in Raabe's texts do not attempt to construct the problematic of Expressionist artistic production, but try to recreate in the mind of the reader the material circumstances that gave rise to the works; as such they are likely to be of lasting use.

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Discussion Contributions on:

Trends in Youth Culture

Nick Kettle

The discussion opened by Martin Jacques on youth culture in *Marxism Today* of September 1973 is of great importance to the theoretical development of the Party. Whilst not for a moment questioning the absolute necessity of continuing study on the Labour movement and the working-class and their relationship to bourgeois society, it is absolutely right that we should extend our understanding of new developments in our society. The practical importance of these developments is crucial to the conception of the "anti-monopoly alliance" and was further recognised at the recent Party Congress, both by the changes on the Executive Committee and in particular by the debate around the resolution on "Young People and the Struggle for Socialism". However, the need for continuing discussions is highlighted by the confusion and errors, both of theory and analysis, that abound in the contribution of John Boyd (*Marxism Today*, December 1973), and if I seem to spend excessive time dealing with his contribution, then it is because I believe it crucial that the approach he adopts and the ideas he puts forward should be rebutted.

Validity of the Concept

As Martin Jacques says in his impressive opening on this undeveloped subject, perhaps the first and most important question that faces Marxists dealing with the question of "youth" is just how valid is such a concept in class society. In a crude analysis of society which divides the population into the two rival camps of "the bourgeoisie" and the "proletariat", youth as something special would not fit. But a more detailed analysis is surely required than this "bi-polar" model. In dealing with this more complex situation that actually exists, I think it is perfectly permissible to talk about youth as a distinct group, provided we recognise its limitations (when does somebody stop being young? What precisely constitutes a generation?) and refrain from unjustifiable generalisations.

Martin Jacques makes one valid justification for this approach—the different socio-economic situation a new generation evolves within. I would tentatively suggest another, particularly for the younger age range and made more valid with increased higher education, and that is the indirect relationships held by many young people to the means of production. Naturally young people are influenced in their class standpoint by their family, education, experiences, expectations, etc., but I would argue that such a position is far from settled and liable to change.

This, rather indirectly, leads me to John Boyd's article and the static and unhistorical conception he adopts. He begins his contribution to the discussion by saying unashamedly that he bases his case on Lenin. This is a good place to start, and, therefore, it is unfortunate that a more rigorous study of Lenin did not prevent his theoretical errors and resulting analytical distortions.

Lenin on Culture

The basis of John Boyd's case is that because youth culture is exploited by the capitalist class and contains definite bourgeois ideas and influences, it is a conscious creation of the ruling-class to subvert what he calls "working-class culture" and hinder the revolutionary movement by alienating the young from this culture. In defence of this thesis he quotes from two articles of Lenin—*Proletarian Culture* and *The Tasks of the Youth Leagues*.

But, in fact, what was Lenin writing about in these articles? Both were written in 1920 and dealt with the *specific* tasks of developing the culture of a state under the dictatorship of the proletariat (i.e. proletarian culture). It is therefore a misleading, mechanical application of Lenin, blindly to use these writings when we are considering culture in a bourgeois society.

Nevertheless, if we *do* read these articles, even the most perfunctory study is sufficient to show Lenin in total opposition to the assertion that anything contaminated by bourgeois ideology must be spurned by the working class movement and its ideology. Again and again in these short articles Lenin spells out the incorrectness of ignoring the culture of previous societies and attempting to create a "special" proletarian culture devoid of its historical development. Possible quotations abound, I hope you will bear with three:

"Proletarian culture is not something that has

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> sprung from nowhere, it is not an invention of those who call themselves experts in proletarian culture, that is all nonsense. Proletarian culture must be the result of the natural development of the store of knowledge which man has accumulated under the yoke of capitalist society, landlord society and bureaucratic society." (*Tasks of the Youth Leagues*)
>
> ". . . we must distinguish between what was bad in the old school and what was useful for us, and we must be able to choose from it what is necessary for Communism." (*Ibid*)
>
> "Marxism won for itself its world historical significance as the ideology of the revolutionary proletariat by the fact that it did not cast aside the valuable gains of the bourgeois epoch, but on the contrary, assimilated and reworked all that was valuable in the more than two thousand years of development of human thought and culture." (*On Proletarian Culture*)

I do not use these quotes in an attempt to sanctify my arguments but to show that Lenin himself rejected the dogmatic position adopted by John Boyd. The idea that cultural developments in a bourgeois society can have *both* progressive and reactionary aspects is seemingly one that John Boyd cannot grasp. But it is central to an understanding of youth culture and the main reason why the whole question is much more complex than the "black" and "white" situation that he posed.

The "Conspiracy" Theory

This, of course, is relevant to the discussion on culture opened in December's *Marxism Today*. Without attempting to formulate any relationship of culture to base and superstructure, I think it is implicit in the whole Marxist conception of class society and ruling class hegemony that the ideology of the ruling class permeates all and every aspect of society to a greater or lesser degree, hence the problem posed by Marx, amongst others, of building socialism with the products of the old bourgeois society, proletarian though they may be. If we fail to understand this, then two pitfalls await us—first, failure to recognise class struggle within the culture of bourgeois society and secondly, the trap of regarding what the working class does as "right" and somehow proletarian, even when this means acclaiming the way of life created for working people and their families by the relationships of capitalist society.

The inadequacies of John Boyd's analysis is clearly seen in his conception of youth culture as "nothing more than the natural dissatisfactions between age and youth blown up out of recognition". What are these "natural" dissatisfactions? What causes them? How and why do they develop? Why at this historical epoch have "Uncle Sam" and John Bull needed to foster youth culture? None of these fundamental questions is, or can be, answered by the static explanation of the phenomenon as the artificial creation of the ruling class aimed at duping the youth of Britain. As Martin Jacques says "only at rare moments . . . does the conspiracy theory of capitalism have much explanatory power!"

American "Invaders"

This is not to argue that the points John Boyd raises about American capital are meaningless or unimportant. He lists a large number of American "invaders" of youth culture and quite rightly states that the youth of Britain are exploited by American capitalism—an increasing trend in fact as the economic influence of the more gullible very young increases. Look no further than the Osmond Brothers.

But in this argument we must be aware of two factors. First, that the American youth under the more direct influence of these same forces were to a large extent responsible—not by themselves, of course—for the development of the greatest post-war peace movement. Alright, most of the participants were not socialists let alone Marxists, and were influenced as much as anything else by self interest, but this should be seen as an important positive development, and it was characterised by many of the "invaders" that John Boyd decries. Secondly, we should remember that in a bourgeois society the youth and everyone else for that matter, will inevitably buy commodities which will produce profits for capital in some country. Whether they drink coco-cola or whisky the youth are being economically exploited. The empirical reasoning of John Boyd—that if the bourgeoisie sell something it is to serve their own interests and is therefore anti-working class—has disturbing implications in relation to Marxism, given the recent upsurge in the publishing of the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin by bourgeois publishing houses!

A Ludicrous Analysis

The ludicrousness of the analysis of youth culture in toto, as a "fireship in disguise" is demonstrated by the absurdities that John Boyd resorts to in the attempt to show the reactionary nature of youth culture. The Beatles are condemned because they wrote a song with the line "It's getting better all the time"—never mind that it is not about the economic position of capitalism but about the singer's sex life. Consequently ignored is the role of the Beatles in leading the revolt against banal sentimentality, the overtly political nature of particularly John Lennon's recent songs, the donation by John Lennon to the UCS Fund, the money raised by George Harrison for Bangladesh, etc. Rock music is labelled as "American"

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and therefore pronounced reactionary. No consideration is given to the way in which the BBC has successfully managed to compartmentalise rock music as the weird taste of a few drop-out student drug-takers which ought to be played late at night and certainly not mixed with the jolly inanities of Radio One during the day.

No thought is given to the role that much modern music, much of it shamelessly commercial, has had as a liberating force for young black people living in and dominated by a white society. The fact that more people want to take Arts and Social Science degrees rather than Science courses must similarly be explained as the machinations of the bourgeoisie, whereas of course successive governments have been frustrated in their attempts to produce more science graduates to run their increasingly technological economy.

Rejection of Capitalist Society

Limitations of space prevent me developing these points or even dealing with all the issues I would like, but I would like firstly to urge that we should be realistic in our analysis and expectation of what youth culture is and can achieve. Quite correctly John Boyd points out some of the real limitations of the political development of British youth today, but he sums up by announcing that "young people have not found any short cuts on the road to socialism" as if only if they had could they dare show their face. Whereas in fact the defeat of such notions as "student vanguardism" demonstrates the maturity of the youth movement.

In reality large sections of youth in Britain, both workers and non-workers are continuously showing their rejection of many aspects of existing society. This takes many forms—smoking drugs; "living with" rather than marrying; wearing jeans and long skirts instead of the collar and tie and suit convention of the City of London, or the mini-skirts adored by the "popular" press; the increasing fight by women against the particular oppressions that face them; the rejection of the pressures to slot them into place in the bourgeois economy; preferring to listen to rock music than Gracie Fields or Mantovani, discotheques to ballroom or even country dancing. Now obviously some of these are more realistic and positive than others, but we must recognise them for what they are, and work both theoretically and practically to turn this disillusionment with bourgeois society to a commitment to socialism.

Denver Walker

It is probably beyond question that young people have a unique approach to and enthusiasm for life; the point is the direction in which this approach leads (or is led): "The young want to learn as much as possible, to find their own solutions to problems; they long for romance and for an ideal. Excess of energy makes them feel more keenly, urges them to show their worth to the maximum. This energy and enthusiasm must be channelled towards a worthwhile goal and not allowed to go to waste or be squandered on trifles." (S. Ikonnikova & V. Lisovsky, *Youth In Our Time*, Novosti 1969.) We need to draw the line between what is a genuine, worthwhile, *young approach* to life and society and what is either innocent squandering of enthusiasm or deliberate misleading of youth.

Pop Culture

Much of what Martin Jaques refers to as "Youth Culture" I think should be termed *Pop Culture*—a phrase in which the second word should not be taken too seriously. (Indeed, the term "Youth Culture" seems a serious misnomer; a culture is something built up by a people or class of a particular country or area over centuries or at least decades as a continuous process which does not cease—either for individuals or the class—at the age of 25, 30, or any other arbitrary point.) While "Pop Culture" is perhaps not the product of a conspiracy, it is in the main *handed down* to youth by the media rather than being an independent creation of youth; and the vast majority of it clearly aims—to some extent consciously—to mislead and divert youth away from reality into the world of Moon-Spoon-June (or its modern counterpart — I-love-you-love-let's-have-a-screw-love). The question at issue is what category the remaining section of "Pop Culture"—the "anti-Establishment", "underground", "non-commercial" trends—generally falls into, and whether it finds its way into the consciousness of youth *in spite of* the ruling class or *with its approval*.

While it is true, as Paul Fauvet points out, that Capitalism will make a profit out of anything, even revolutionary ideas, it is important to examine the way it does this (with direct reference to Marxism, for instance, an edition of the *Communist Manifesto* with an introduction by A. J. P. Taylor longer than the book itself; or the pushing of Trotskyism and Maoism as "revolutionary" Marxism), and to see where, if anywhere, it draws the line. Comrade Fauvet seems to think the ruling class draws the line at "self-activity of youth"

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which he defines as skinheadism, the hippy phenomenon, the breakdown of bourgeois morality and the use of Pot and LSD. On the contrary, the media have splashed them across the front pages with hardly concealed approval. In some cases the media have even been a major factor in the spread of such ideas; the current craze of "streaking" (probably forgotten by the time of publication) has been *exclusively* spread, deliberately and approvingly, by the media as a wonderful distraction. It certainly is not a manifestation of an independent "Youth Culture", in spite of the vicious fines imposed by a few insane magistrates who mistakenly consider it a threat to bourgeois morality.

Acceptance of the System

None of these phenomena is a serious challenge to Capitalism; nor have they been treated as such by any other than the most backward elements of the ruling class. There can be no serious danger of the breakdown of the bourgeois economic basis of the family in our society, although there can and should be a strong ideological challenge to it. This challenge, however, will not come from the hippy movement or *OZ* (although to some extent both of these have *raised* the issue), and the final outcome of the *OZ* trial was a victory not only (undeniably) for the progressive and democratic movements, but also, unfortunately for the farther-sighted section of the ruling class.

The hippy "drop-out" syndrome is based on *acceptance* of the system, or at least of our total inability to change it; and the drug philosophy, far from being a challenge to bourgeois ideas, is a development of the ideas that Lenin considered it politically necessary to write a lengthy refutation of, the ideas of Berkeley and Mach, that is, solipsistic idealism, the philosophy of the bourgeoisie in retreat, of which LSD is as much a part as £.s.d. Paul Fauvet is much nearer the mark in referring to ruling class hostility to the 144 Piccadilly squatters, who represented some sort of physical threat (however limited) to property and legality; but to suggest that the anti-hippy 'worthies of St. Ives' represent anything other than the most backward-looking section of the ruling class and its hangers-on, would be misleading.

On Pop Music, Martin Jaques suggests that the progressiveness of music can be judged not merely on the basis of content, but on the extent to which the form encourages active involvement and participation. While such an elevation of form above content seems unmarxist to me, I would have thought that the involvement encouraged by almost *all* formal trends in Pop Music was of an unconscious nature and based on relation to sound and movement rather than to *people*, and as such, anti-progressive by definition. However, I think we *should* examine the actual lyrical content (which is, after all, bound to some extent to reflect any progressive trends) of the "critical" sectors of Pop Music and consider whether such content is tolerated by the ruling class *simply* because it makes money or on a more *conscious* basis.

Peter Watkins' film *Privilege* (1967), in spite of its negative and anti-working class aspects, was not only strongly anti-ruling class, but made the point that the pop singer who begins to question his role as prescribed by his employers has not long to go. It is perhaps significant in view of this that Paul Jones who played the lead role, has been very little heard of since. John Lennon, however, is still very much around, and I should like to take him as perhaps the most typical example of the "anti-Establishment" pop figure.

John Lennon

It would be unfair to dismiss Lennon's pre-1966 songs as Moon-Spoon-June, as many of them were characterised by a more serious and thinking attitude to personal relationships than, for instance, the fundamentally reactionary, aggressive and male chauvinist approach of the Rolling Stones (—who incidentally reached their political nadir on the "Beggars' Banquet" LP in referring to the October Revolution as the work of Satan in "Sympathy for the Devil"). There is nothing, however, in the Beatles' early work that reflects Lennon's 1963 quote: "People say we're loaded with money, but by comparison with those who are supposed to speak the Queen's English, that's ridiculous. They've got capital behind them and they're earning on top of that. The more people you meet, the more you realise it's all a class thing."

Unfortunately, when he first moved seriously away from conventional lyrics (and sounds), it was in the direction of drug culture—"Tomorrow never knows", "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds". It is, however, interesting to note that "Day in the Life" on the Sgt. Pepper LP was banned by the BBC on the grounds of "references to drugs" in spite of various songs by the Beatles and others, much more explicit on this theme, apparently being quite acceptable. Perhaps the reference (however vague) to the housing situation ("4,000 holes in Blackburn, Lancashire") and the derogatory reference to a member of the Guinness family killed in a car crash had more to do with its banning than the stated reasons.

Lennon, however returned to complete respectability with "Revolution" on the White Album. Whatever his intention, this can only be described as a piece of blatant anti-communism. Rejecting "changing the world" in favour of

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"changing your head", this song also makes reference to the YCL's campaign of aid to the NLF (in which I am proud to have taken part): "But if you want money for people with minds that hate/Then all I can tell you is brother you have to wait." Some "revolution" this! No doubt the sort of revolution the ruling class will welcome at any time.

Lennon's subsequent, no doubt sincere, campaigning for peace, was equally welcome since its confused and idealistic nature enabled the media to smear the whole peace movement as insane and childish. Even the handing in of his MBE was in protest not only against the Vietnam and Biafra wars, but also "against 'Cold Turkey' slipping down the charts"! How better to blunt a presumably serious political gesture? In "The Ballad of John and Yoko", however, Lennon was clearly beginning to recognise the use to which the media were putting him: "They look just like two gurus in drag. . . . We're only trying to get us some peace", and his ideas moved forward. "Working Class Hero" shows a clear contempt for bourgeois society and sympathy for the working class from whom Lennon had sprung.

However, this is balanced by its lack of any way forward and its contempt for those same workers: "You're still fucking peasants as far as I can see" —which while it expresses an understandable despair at the lack of revolutionary feeling in the working class, is hardly the sort of statement to take it forward; on the contrary, it expresses a reluctant but inevitable acceptance of Capitalism.

"Imagine" is to us, and possibly to Lennon, an unquestionably beautiful picture of the future communist society. However, we can be fairly certain that the people he refers to as wanting such a society did not *for him* include the world's 50,000,000 Communists or the 250,000,000 people of the USSR actively building that society. And the vagueness of the song and its lack of any practical approach to socialism prevent it from having a really political impact or being in any way a guide or spur to action.

However, the mass movements find their reflections everywhere; even, at times, in pop stars. The Lennon/Ono LP "Sometime in New York City"—which very nearly was not even released in Britain, contained tracks on Angela Davis, the Attica State Prison massacre, Women's Liberation, and two on Ireland. Suddenly the attitude changed. The critics called it musically brilliant, but universally slammed its content as "preaching". Not only that, but the BBC immediately banned "The Luck of the Irish" and "Sunday Bloody Sunday", as they also did with singles on Ireland by Wings and McGuinness Flint. Clearly the ruling class *does* know where to draw the line. For a while Lennon disappeared from public view (or media coverage). However, his latest record, "Mind Games" as the name implies, takes us back to the good old days of navel contemplation, this time without benefit of LSD, and the critics blossom forth in unlimited eulogies. The lost sheep has returned to the fold.

The Ruling Class Content

None of the foregoing is to suggest that the ruling class did, or could, dictate Lennon's or anyone else's lyrics. It is, however, to suggest that on the whole they are quite happy with them: happy with drug culture and idealist philosophy; happy with vague and confused ideas of revolution (how better to mislead the potential revolutionary?). The issue is not whether these and other concepts of "anti-Establishment" pop are the creation of the songwriters or of a secret capitalist conspiracy; we can only judge objectively, and objectively, irrespective of intention, such ideas *hold back* the mass struggle. When "Pop Culture", however, begins to reflect genuinely popular movements and ask basic questions, it is quickly stamped on or smothered. Of course, it only very rarely reaches this stage, as those "independent" tendencies can usually be bent to serve "Pop Culture's" real aims. The carrot is more use than the stick, although the stick is always kept ready.

Obviously genuinely progressive tendencies in "Pop Culture"—as Lennon's temporarily was—are welcome; but we can only encourage them *indirectly* through the depth and breadth of mass struggle—EMI has a much more direct say in whether they shall be permitted to continue; and they can never become the dominant trend in "Pop Culture". For "Pop Culture" does not unite youth—it attempts to divide them from the rest of the working class; even Pete Townsend of the Who at a time when he was supposed to be a Young Communist could produce nothing better than "My Generation", a piece of mindless adult-hatred. Perhaps Paul McCartney unconsciously hit the nail on the head in 1963 when he said: "Don't for heaven's sake call us the new youth, because that's a load of old rubbish." Quite right: the "New Youth" is the Young Communist League and the militant young workers of Britain, fighting alongside the older members of the movement; and it is only from that movement that a real culture, not young or old, but *working class*, can come.

Trends in Youth Culture

No contributions on "Trends in Youth Culture" will be accepted after August 1st. After that date the printing of contributions received will be completed and Martin Jacques will reply to the discussion.

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Man, Environment, and the Great Growth Debate

John Mathews

In an admirable series of articles in the March, April and May issues of *Marxism Today*, Richard Clarke has given a thorough airing to the debate currently raging in scientific circles on the future of the planet Earth. He rightly protests against Marxist hostility or indifference to subjects of a purely technical concern, like the energy and mineral resources of the earth, the carrying capacity of the biosphere, and the long-term effects of population growth. He insists that these are issues of crucial importance to any future socialist society, and only a dogmatist would disagree with him.

In the great debate over whether growth of capital stocks and population can continue, and if so whether it is desirable, Clarke adopts a neutral stand. He says that Marxists cannot afford to be complacent about the environment and the future development of technology; equally he rejects the forecasts of "eco-doom", on the grounds that they pay inadequate attention to political and social dimensions, and that they are used as a stick to beat the workers with when they get too "greedy".

That is a very schematic summary of a lengthily-argued and logically coherent article. I should say at once that I wholeheartedly endorse Clarke's stand against Marxist complacency—if anything, I feel he understated the urgency of these questions.

Scientific Work of the Anti-Growth School

Already in the US we have glimpsed what urban break-down in a highly polarised, highly industrialised society can mean: apolitical and unorganised street violence, looting and arson. There is a world of difference between that sort of protest and the protest of a disciplined miners' union striking in support of its demands and bringing down a government.

We have also witnessed this decade four major famines in as many years, and the prospect of the future millions who are bound to starve to death is not a pleasant one. It is clear then that any strategy aimed at achieving long-term survival for our species must start with fundamentals like population control, food supply, shelter and control of disease. If certain Marxists claim that socialism will solve these problems automatically, they are deluding no-one but themselves.

What I will not endorse in Clarke's essay is his attitude to the scientific work of the anti-growth school (as opposed to the propagandist work, which is often ill-informed and woefully wrong-headed). In his opening chapter, Clarke indicates to us what a "Marxist" approach might be to the science of demography (implying that the two are separate), and then he goes on to review the MIT work published under the title "The Limits to Growth". He finds the theoretical model employed too crude and oversimplified, too dependent on empirical observation and even guesswork to have any validity. It is too arbitrary in its choice of variables, and too pessimistic in its estimates of future supply of non-renewable resources. He concludes, along with the Science Policy Research Unit at Sussex University, that the model grossly under-estimates the adaptive power of social and technological changes, and finally dismisses it as a piece of "computer fetishism".

Well my judgment may seem a little harsh, but I think it is about time that this lofty, condescending and all-too-inquisitorial approach of "Marxists" to basic science be shown up for the sham it really is. The fact is that Clarke has completely misrepresented the MIT work, and has been so zealous in his denunciation of it, that he has blinded himself to its positive aspects. Let us examine the MIT global model ourselves, and then look again at Clarke's conclusions.

Meadows and his co-workers put forward three very simple, very basic theses. These were:

1. a theory (or model) of economic activity should be more concerned with *stocks* than with *flows*;
2. by their very nature, the growth of such specifically social stocks as population and capital tends to be exponential;
3. against a finite base of material and energy resources, exponential growth cannot continue forever.

Three Theses

The first thesis represents an assault on the comfortable assumptions of neo-classical economic theory, which is obsessed with flows of income and materials, and ignores the growth of stocks (and incidentally, dodging the issue of the *distribution* of these stocks amongst the population) or treats such

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growth as "inevitable". As such, this thesis goes back to the spirit of classical political economy, to Ricardo and Marx, with their emphasis on the relationships between land, population, agricultural output and industrial output.

The second thesis goes back to Malthus, who first remarked that population growth proceeds in a geometric (or as we would now say, an exponential[1]) manner. Meadows *et al* go further and argue that unconstrained population growth *must* be exponential, because the rate of reproduction at any time must depend on the number of reproducers. In other words, the bigger the population gets, the faster it seems to grow—and the same should apply to capital stock. Now it is a fact that Marx did not propose an exponential model of capital accumulation. Does this mean such a model is bound to be incorrect?

The third thesis is simply stating the obvious: the planet is a finite system of low-entropy matter and energy, and the accelerating degradation of this to high-entropy waste and heat cannot go on forever. This is all the thesis is saying. But it needs saying, because again neo-classical economics (which holds sway in universities the world over) is not concerned with the physical dimensions of its variables (categories such as income, output, profit, utility)—it simply endows them with "value" and sets them in the market-place. But all value has a material source, say the MIT modellers—in the same fashion that Ricardo and Marx insisted that all value has its source in labour.

Limits to Exponential Growth

It should be clear that the first and third theses have much in common with Marx—but the second thesis is an important addition. If unconstrained growth is exponential, then it can be *quantified*. A mathematical model can be set up. We start with a certain supply of material resources, and a certain stock of population and capital, and then we let the system run by simulation on a digital computer.

In this way we calculate how long these stocks can grow exponentially before their resource base is exhausted. In other words, we calculate the limits to exponential growth. And it turns out that we can say with a fair degree of accuracy that growth cannot continue unchecked for more than a further 100 years. Since this is a very short time, we are forced to the conclusion that if there is to be the necessary swing away from exponential growth towards a steady-state, it will only come about as a result of drastic social changes both in the industrialised west and in the Third world.

This then is what the MIT calculations show: that without a drastic shifting of social priorities *now*, exponential growth will continue unchecked, and will come up against physical limits much sooner than we expect (restraints on population like war, pestilence and famine). Indeed it seems that the model was set up precisely for this purpose—to argue the case for social change *now*, before it is too late. In a different terminology, their conclusion is this: the forces of production have grown to the point where they are now in open contradiction with the social relations of production. Something must give somewhere. Does the message sound familiar? Of course it does—it is Marx returned from the grave.

In the Name of Marxism

So why does Clarke feel called upon to denounce these arguments in the name of Marxism? Again and again he bemoans the fact that politics and economics are left out of the MIT model. He informs us that the model "totally under-estimates the potential of technology and completely ignores certain key adaptive technological, social and political feed-back loops that, when introduced, radically alter the behaviour of the model". *But these factors were explicitly left out in order to show how far-reaching the social adaptation would have to be*. The MIT work was not a *prediction*, but a rather complicated calculation that was in no way feasible before the advent of computers. If social change is to be *incorporated* in the model, how is it to be quantified?

We either assume, arbitrarily and in the teeth of all evidence to the contrary, that technology expands exponentially, thus keeping up with population and capital, and staving off collapse. Or else we assume that it will not expand exponentially, but that there will be discontinuities in the model whenever collapse is imminent that for want of a better term we call revolutions.

Either way our calculation of the limits to growth is made meaningless. Clarke goes along with the facile Sussex criticism of the MIT work that such social adaptations as the price mechanism working through a free market would sufficiently ration natural resources to prolong collapse indefinitely. Yet Meadows *et al* specifically pointed to the lags involved in market mechanisms, and for this reason characterised their model as an "overshoot and collapse" mode of system behaviour. And what evidence does Clarke offer that technology would be able to overcome the curse of decreasing returns?

[1] But not "super-exponential", as Clarke suggests in his comments on demography. He should know that the exponential function $y=yoe^{xt}$ increases faster than any possible polynomial of the form $y=yo+x^{nt}$, precisely because its rate of change varies with its instantaneous magnitude: this is the mathematical description of constant proportional growth. "Super-exponential" growth is a mathematical absurdity.

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Nothing but a quote from one Frederick Engels, a 24 year old writing in 1844 on a subject he clearly knew nothing about:

> ". . . science increases as fast as population; the latter increases in proportion to the size of the previous generation and science advances in proportion to the body of knowledge passed down to it by the previous generation. That is, in the most normal conditions it also grows in geometrical progression —and what is impossible for science?"[2,3]

Apparently nothing. No matter how much of a mess we make of things, science will clean it up for us. And what is odd is that here we have a Marxist telling these MIT upstarts that the social relations of production will keep nicely in step with the forces of production through the laudable resources of the market and technological change.

The Results are Neutral

But these are quibbles. I fully share Clarke's fear that the MIT calculations may be used in some quarters as support for a policy of "cleaning up" the environment, i.e. as support for a *technical* solution to a *political* problem. But he is attacking the wrong people. Is it not obvious that they can equally well be used to support an exclusively political solution? The results offer no apology for any one nation, industry or class—they are completely neutral and firmly rooted in the universalist traditions of the finest science. But once they are in the public arena they can be picked up by anyone. And who *is* picking them up and distorting them in their own interests? None other than the most reactionary elements in every advanced industrial nation. They point to the necessity for growth to eventually stop, and argue that unfortunately the Third World must give up the idea of industrialising. They point to the need for a radical re-orientation of policy, and argue that this is no time to tolerate dissent: law and order must at all costs be enforced, so that the authorities can get on with the job of saving humanity.

And where are the socialists opposing these specious arguments? Where indeed. Most of them are too busy attacking the credentials of the MIT modellers, or wishing away the limits to growth, or quoting fragments of Marx and Engels, or even eulogising the market as a means of survival, Surely it is clear that the socialists should be out there campaigning harder than ever, pointing out that time is now precious: if there is not a drastic re-distribution of wealth both on a global scale and within nations, coupled to a drastic overhaul of political institutions, the species *Homo sapiens* faces extinction.

A Science or a Dogma?

Comrade Clarke is out there campaigning for Marxism. In his chapter one, he lamented that there is a great deal of awareness and concern in the conservationist movement "awaiting a positive lead"; in his chapter three he quotes Barry Commoner with approval warning all those who propose to cure the environmental crisis that "they undertake thereby to change the course of history".

It is Marxism, he argues, that must show the way: only Marxism can temper people's concern for the environment with an understanding of society. Okay, but what is Marxism anyway, if not a rigorous science of society, a science which makes no apologies for the status quo, or for any vested interests? It is either a science or a dogma—and I would emphatically reject any interpretation of Marxism as the Holy Law of the Founding Fathers, to be tampered with at our peril.

If it is a science, then it must be in a constant state of flux, bringing new concepts to bear on the task of understanding society in order to change it. Certainly "Marxists" do not have a monopoly on this science of society: in fact their influence in the past has often been negative and obstructive of further progress in the understanding of social mechanisms. But others have pushed forward, some of them bringing new life to economic and demographic disciplines (like the MIT team), and others concentrating on the purely political overtones of a necessary end to growth. And if Clarke failed to grasp completely the implications of the MIT work, he has wilfully misunderstood some of the theoreticians of the "steady-state economy".

Consider what he says of Garrett Hardin's "The Tragedy of the Commons": "a neat tidy parable that conveniently explains away the problem", "an argument that has interesting similarities to that which castigates the 'greedy workers' wanting 'too large a slice of the economic cake' ".

Technology of Social Co-ordination

No, comrade Clarke, you are not getting away with that. Again we must reconsider Hardin's comments for ourselves. He is concerned, like many another US economist from Kenneth Boulding onwards, to draw out the logic of free enterprise, and to show how it necessarily interacts with the environment. He demonstrates conclusively that an economy of free entrepreneurs despoiling the planet

[2] Engels, F.; *Outlines of a Critique of Political economy* (1844).

[3] More substantial evidence would have to be along the following lines. Productivity (rigorously defined) varies directly with level of technology. Therefore a constant growth rate in productivity implies exponential growth of level of technology. But are these statements true? Is there historical evidence that productivity has a constant growth rate?

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for private gain is incompatible with a finite resource base. Private calculation, on the scale of modern industry, leads to public disaster.

This is what Garrett Hardin is arguing through his analogy of herdsmen on the common, all increasing their private flocks to the point of total collapse and destruction. He is arguing for social control—the sort of control that would give political stability to a stable economy. In other words he is arguing for socialism. Now I do not know Garrett Hardin personally, and in private life he may well be the raving elitist and racialist that Clarke portrays, but his public pronouncements are most definitely in favour of socialism.

All of these "steady-state" theorists have faced up to the fact that a non-expanding economy *necessitates* collective control of population level, resource depletion, waste disposal and the like.[4] Some of their ideas are ingenious. For instance Kenneth Boulding has advocated a system of birth control vouchers, freely exchangeable on the open market. Herman Daly has thought up a scheme for government auction of resource depletion vouchers. The explicit aim of these schemes is to ensure macro-stability while maximising micro-freedom. I would call them all contributions to a *technology of social co-ordination*: a technology that must largely be inspired by its underlying rigorous science of society. Such a technology should bear little resemblance to the primitive system of laws, constitutions, markets, pressure groups, parties and kinship groupings that we currently labour under. Its elaboration must be seen as a vital objective in this decade. Its programme will be the programme of Marxism: change through understanding; but its content will not be the chapter headings of *Capital*.

Questions of Great Importance

So much for this brief review of what I considered to be the shortcomings in Richard Clarke's arguments. It remains for me to applaud his boldness in laying bare the issue of the environment as a key area of future party policy. Where for instance do communists stand on the future of nuclear power? Comrade Clarke in his discussion of energy resources insists that Britain's future nuclear industry should be based on the home produced Advanced Gas Cooled Reactors or the earlier Magnox gas-cooled reactors.

On the other hand a special correspondent in the *Morning Star* has dismissed these UK reactors as expensive delusions, and argues in favour of buying the US-built light-water reactors. Who is right? What is the policy of our comrades in the power supply industry? What about party policy on food supply?

My own feeling is that we should be pressing for more efficient biological energy conversion from sunlight to carbohydrate in vast oceanic algae farms, then use this carbohydrate to harvest protein from equally vast fish farms. Certainly I would categorise the tendency towards manufacturing food from petroleum in such a way that every pound of protein produced uses up more calories than it supplies as an expensive and dangerous folly. And finally, where do we stand on the future of industrial organisation and urban planning?

It might have been alright for Marx to conceptualise capitalism as an abstract system of social relations working to *contain* the forces of production; he assumed that when these forces were liberated by social revolution, they would usher in a period of abundance for all. A century later, we can no longer be so optimistic. In fact the evidence is overwhelming that the sort of energy-intensive industry that we are familiar with leads inevitably to the creation of urban death-traps and to an over-integrated economy in which a single breakdown can lead to system collapse.

Far more attention will have to be given to how we may best live off our solar income—the only really "free good" we enjoy. And solar energy, or tidal energy and wind energy (which ultimately derive from the rotation of the earth) implies a decentralised mode of industrial production using "intermediate" technology. And that implies a radical break with our industrial past. To my mind all of these questions are of paramount importance: they deserve a party conference in the near future when some guidelines for a policy can be thrashed out.[5]

[4] Of course collective control of population level, control of resource depletion, etc. equally imply a non-expanding economy (or perhaps it would be better to say a *stable* economy, i.e. an economy that is not expanding relative to its niche in the biosphere). It goes without saying that if communism means anything, it means this: a stable, collectively controlled economy. We would not expect human ingenuity to decline under such conditions—on the contrary we should witness a flowering of science and invention, with a concomitant rise in standards of living.

[5] I would like to express my thanks to Bob Rowthorn for his comments on a preliminary draft of this article.

(Continued from p 208)

happened to Phase 3, with the continuing rise in world commodity prices (even before the oil price rises), the failure of the UK terms of trade to improve, and the continuing high level of world interest rates. Counter-inflation policies such as Phases 1, 2 and 3 represent an attempt to make the British working people pay the prices of the weakness of British capitalism and the intensification of inter-imperialist rivalry.

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Partisanship and Objectivity in Theoretical Work

Gerald Laversha

(The author is a research student at Manchester University working on mathematical logic.)

I would like to make a few remarks on Maurice Cornforth's interesting article in *Marxism Today* of January 1974, which made a number of very important points on questions of great relevance for comrades engaged in theoretical work. As a polemic against certain ideas on this topic (ideas emanating not only from the ruling class but also held by some sections of our own movement), his article is certainly opportune. There are, nevertheless, weaknesses in his mode of argument, which, I think, might well obscure some of the correct conclusions.

In a previous *Marxism Today* article, Cde. Cornforth argued against the use of "antitheses" in Marxist thinking. I agree that it is of no use to pose "black and white alternatives", since this often involves us in a spurious choice. But historical materialism is full of "dialectical pairs", such as use value/value or constant/variable capital, which are dialectical in the sense that the relation between the terms is not a simple negation, but much more complex; a relation which it is Marxism's task to *investigate*. We should not shy away from such "antitheses" as I think Cde. Cornforth is liable to do; rather we should look more closely at them. One of these is Althusser's distinction science/ideology. I think that Comrade Cornforth is insufficiently clear on the exact meaning of this distinction, and is guilty of setting up an "Aunt Sally" which it is very easy to knock down.

Ideology and Science

The word "ideology" is much used in marxist jargon; indeed, it is used far too much. Think of all the different things that this word covers in everyday socialist parlance: art, culture, theory, propaganda, consciousness, philosophy. These terms all denote different things, and it is clearly confusing to use one word to cover them all. Especially so, since Marx himself used the term "ideology" to mean something quite specific. He used it to denote a set of ideas, or a viewpoint on reality, derived from one's *lived relation* with the world, one's practice. These ideas are spontaneous, immediate; that is, they do not come from considered reasoning, but as a "reaction" to experience.

This definition has one especially significant consequence: namely, ideology is *not* a deliberate falsification of reality to delude people. For two reasons. First, there is no "subject" whose evil scheme is mystification; the acquisition of ideology is an objective process springing from practical contact with the world. Secondly, ideology is not necessarily "false", but can, and often does, contain elements which correspond to reality. Against this, Althusser poses the concept of *science*. A science, like an ideology, is a set of ideas; what distinguishes it from an ideology is the way in which these ideas are arrived at.

(a) Science is not spontaneous, but a complex, considered process of creation, of "theoretical practice", whose specific form depends on the particular science being studied.

(b) Science is objective; it gives knowledge of a particular *object* in the real world, which exists independently of the investigator, so scientific results are not dependent on the whim of the theorist—whereas ideology has no *real* object at all.

(c) The relationship of theory to reality is *tested* by particular scientific techniques—in the case of the natural sciences, experiment and observation—whereas ideology is more often *assumed*. (In Althusser's words, for ideology the *practico-social* function dominates over the *knowledge-giving* function.) I am aware that this point raises very great difficulties; a scientific experiment involving observation through a telescope itself depends on the theory of optics, so science is by no means as self-contained as immediately appears. However, in such cases it is possible to trace back to the theoretical results upon which our experiments rest; it is then possible to investigate scientifically the very foundations of science. This is not so with ideology, which is self-contained (or, in Cornforth's words, closed) in another sense; in that questioning its presuppositions leads to a circularity, or to problems which *cannot* be *posed* within the ideological system. (Althusser develops

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this point in his book *Reading Capital*, NLB).

Now I would like to look at a few of the points raised by Cde. Cornforth in his article.

Natural and Social Science

(i) He distinguishes between "natural" and "social" science (i.e. Marxism) on the basis that the latter investigates relations between men, who are themselves doing the investigating, and whose results react upon the study's object; thus it is impossible to separate the theory and the theorists. But the problem of the "observing subject" is not foreign even to natural science; witness the astounding breakthroughs in physics at the beginning of this century, with the rise of relativity, quantum theory, and especially Heisenberg's work on the way in which our *observation* of physical entities *disturbs* them. (It is interesting, from the standpoint of historical materialism, that a simultaneous recognition of the role of "mutual inter-relationship" was taking place in other fields, ranging from Cubism in art to the massive political upheavals culminating in the Russian Revolution.)

These new developments were heralded by some philosophers as destroying the objectivity of science, and there were even such idealist interpretations within the communist movement. Lenin found it necessary to write "Materialism and Empirio-criticism" to refute the views of the latter. He showed that it was not a question of destroying objectivity, but of actually *preserving* it, by acquiring a *deeper* understanding of matter and reality. This criterion of objectivity extends to historical materialism in the same way. A science of society which did not take account of the choices open to classes engaged in social struggles, and the impact of socialist theory on their political practice, would be *false* and *unscientific;* economic determinism in social science is actually opposed to objectivity. So it is not here that the basic distinction between natural and social science lies.

(ii) This distinction should rather apply to the method of testing. A hypothesis of natural science can be tested in "laboratory conditions", or, at any rate, within a well-defined degree of control. This is not so for historical materialism. The criterion of validity lies, as Lenin and Mao have pointed out, in practice, and particularly in the relationship between the party (the collective intellectual and organiser) and the people. This is because of the peculiarity of the object of Marxism; that the masses form not only one of the objects of investigation of the theory, but are also the *aim* of the theory. A judgment of Marxism, if made by an active Leninist party, will realise itself in a political line addressed to the masses, and the success or failure of this line will affect the original judgment.

Scientific Theory and Scientific Technique

(iii) Cornforth makes an insufficient distinction between a scientific theory and scientific *technique*. This distinction is fairly evident to anybody who has studied and researched in natural sciences or mathematics. The evolution of these sciences did not follow the "axiomatic" development one finds in a textbook. There are always areas within a science developed only at a "technical" level, in that, although various methods may be known of achieving desired ends, it is unknown why these methods work. Here the techniques are ahead of the theory. (For instance, the "technical practice" of psychoanalysis predated Freud's discovery of the basic concepts and his systematisation of that science. The same is very true of Marxism; hence a need for a careful "reading" of the classics.)

Under this heading too comes the question of the development of a science; the question of choosing which direction to research in, and which problems to attack. It is obvious that this choice does not affect the objective nature of the results obtained. (A crude picture of a science might be: a series of channels cut in stone, into which water is capable of flowing. It is possible to dam or unblock certain channels, but not to invent new channels at will. This picture is crude since it seems to ignore the "creative urge" of the scientist; one must, however, realise that this urge is subject to *real* limits. A "creative" Marxist could not demonstrate false facts about society, however attractive or ingenious they might be!)

Now all of what Maurice Cornforth says about bourgeois society encroaching on science (restrictions on research due to its narrow social planning, restrictive social experience of the scientist) concerns the technique of science rather than the theory itself. This applies in particular to his opening remark: there is no theory in the abstract, since theories are made by people. Of course, the effect of bourgeois society on the technical development of Marxism has been much greater than in the case of any other science.

Scientific Theory and Partisanship

(iv) It follows that the scientific theory itself is *not* partisan; this applies equally well to physics, mathematics, historical materialism. That is to say, that one would obtain the same results regardless of one's politics. Now this is obviously true of the natural sciences, and to "import" partisanship into these results in their "overpoliticisation", with a detrimental effect usually rendering them unscientific. (Very few people would disagree with this, although scattered pseudo-Maoists have been known to assert that there is "bourgeois" and "proletarian" mathematics!)

With historical materialism, however, my

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proposal might seem rather shocking. It is obvious that one's politics will affect the motivation for practising Marxism, and the academic bias of capitalist society makes it very difficult for serious research to be undertaken; also the lack of empirical material is a major obstacle. Nevertheless I assert that the theory itself is non-partisan. No amount of solidarity with oppressed peoples will change the objective truth of Marxism, will overcome concrete facts. (Though of course revolutionary ardour is of the *utmost* importance in winning struggles; the Vietnamese people could defeat US imperialism partly because of their gallant will, but also because "history was on their side".) It is thus incorrect to pose "bourgeois social science" against "proletarian social science= Marxism" since the former is simply *not scientific*. It is *ideological theory:* that is, it is at basis derived from ideological conceptions of the world, although dressed up in theoretical guise.

So *here* is where partisanship enters: in defending science against ideology. This partisanship is exhibited both at the level of scientific investigation to refute the ideology (a), and, (b), at the philosophical level.

Challenge of Ideology to Science

(a) In what ways does ideology encroach on science? Maurice Cornforth gives several good examples, taken both from capitalist and pre-capitalist formations. (Note that even the bourgeoisie, in its "time", has had to defend science from feudal-religious ideology.) The most obvious way is by advancing "theories" which are consciously or unconsciously antagonistic; usually these do not even "meet" science since the questions that science poses are anathema to the ideology. Or else the basic concepts of the science (e.g. the Marxist one of "class") are either ruled out of order, or distorted. In its birth struggles every science has to free itself from ideological preconceptions; here lies Althusser's "epistemological break". Secondly, ideology represses scientific research, in ways which Cornforth outlined very well.

There is a third, less obvious, example which is especially relevant to the case of historical materialism. This concerns the specifically ideological role of the university, as an institution which imposes particular authority relationships in teaching/learning, and particular values on the acquisition of knowledge and the status of the theoretician. Hence it follows that the ideas of the theoretician will be affected by his participation in the university structure; he will acquire, in the course of his research work, elitist and individualist conceptions. Now if he is a natural scientist, this may not matter so much, since the field is established and does not pose any real threat to the continuance of the bourgeois system.

But it is different with historical materialism; even if he is entirely untainted by the ideas of the bourgeois ideologues, our communist intellectual will still be adversely influenced by his role inside the university—unless he takes deliberate steps to counteract it. Of course, many of our Party academics are fully conscious of this and take practical steps to counteract it. (Some suffer the consequences of their action!). Also, events like the Communist University, organised each year by the Party, are extremely important in this respect, both for teachers and learners.

These, I believe, are the main areas on which ideology challenges science on the "theoretical" level.

In the Field of Philosophy

(b) The battle is also joined on the field of *philosophy*. This is because, even if ideology can be driven back substantially by arguments *within* science, it can never be thereby entirely defeated, for one of its properties is precisely its irrefutability, owing to its circular nature. The battle in the *last instance* is a class struggle in philosophy.

Althusser asserts (in my view, correctly) that philosophy is *not* a science. Maybe this remark should be qualified, so that it applies to certain departments inside philosophy, notably ontology and epistemology. Ontology is concerned with what exists; this problem cannot be decided scientifically. Rather it is the job of ontology to distinguish between science (or materialism) and idealism. (Notice that the distinguishing features of a science are precisely those of materialism.) Inasmuch as it is always to the benefit of the working class to defend science, this is a *partisan* question, debated polemically. Defending science consists in demarcating between it and ideology, and on the philosophical level this comes down to supporting materialism. At the same time, epistemology (theory of knowledge) is also partisan, for it defends scientific practice and theory from distortions such as subjectivism, empiricism and dogmatism.

In summary, I believe this approach is better than Maurice Cornforth's, since it asserts very positively that our partisanship is aimed against the retardation of knowledge and social progress, rather than towards "distorting" this progress. We are fully agreed that the creative development of Marxism is a priority; this priority rather pushes the philosophical debate into the background. This is very welcome, especially in a political situation where we hope that our theory may very soon become practice!

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